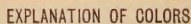


IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST



ON LAND

- | | |
|--------|------------------------|
| Orange | Over 7,000 ft. |
| Orange | 5,000 to 7,000 ft |
| Orange | 2,000 to 5,000 " |
| Orange | 1,000 to 2,000 " |
| Green | Sea Level to 1,000 ft. |
| Green | " " " 1,000 ft. below |
| Green | 1,000 to 1,202 " " |

ON WATER

-  0 to 500 ft.
 500 to 1,000 ft.
 Over 1,000 ft.



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FOUNDED BY REV. FRANCIS N. PELOUBET, D.D.

SELECT NOTES

ON THE

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR

1928

The Gospel of the Son of God:

STUDIES IN MARK.

(SIX MONTHS' COURSE) JANUARY-JUNE.

The Life and Letters of Paul:

(SIX MONTHS' COURSE) JULY-DECEMBER.

Four full-page half-tone pictures and over 125 illustrations in the text.

BY

AMOS R. WELLS, LITT.D., LL.D.,

FOR TWENTY YEARS DR. PELOUBET'S ASSOCIATE
IN WRITING THIS BOOK.

Fifty-fourth Annual Volume.

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INTRODUCTION.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LESSONS IN MARK.

FIRST QUARTER LESSON	EVENTS	PLACE	DATE	REFERENCE
I.	Birth of John the Baptist . . .	Judæa	June, B. C. 5	Luke 1: 57-80
	Birth of Jesus . . .	Bethlehem	Dec., B. C. 5	Luke 2: 1-20
	Childhood and youth of Jesus . .	Nazareth	B. C. 2-26	Luke 2: 39-50
	Baptism of Jesus . . .	Jordan	Jan., A. D. 27	Mark 1: 1-11
	Temptation of Jesus . . .	Wilderness of Judæa	Jan.-Feb., 27	Mark 1: 12, 13
II.	Wedding at Cana . . .	Cana	Feb., 27	John 2: 1-12
	Ministry in Judæa . . .	Judæa	Summer, 27	John 3: 22-36
	Nobleman's son healed . . .	Capernaum	Dec., 27	John 4: 43-54
	Healing at Pool of Bethesda . .	Jerusalem	Mar.-Apr., 28	John 5: 2-47
	Miracles of healing . . .	Galilee	Apr.-May, 28	Mark 1: 1-45
III.	Healing a paralytic . . .	Capernaum	May-June, 28	Mark 2: 1-12
IV.	Healing on the Sabbath . . .	Capernaum	May-June, 28	Mark 2: 18-3: 6
V.	Growing fame of Jesus . . .	Galilee	May-June, 28	Mark 3: 7-12
	Calling of the Twelve . . .	Horns of Hattin	Midsummer	Mark 3: 13-19
VI.	Sermon on the Mount . . .	Horns of Hattin	Midsummer	Matt. 5: 6, 7
	Jesus misunderstood . . .	Capernaum	Autumn, 28	Mark 3: 19-35
VII.	Parables by the seaside . . .	Sea of Galilee	Autumn, 28	Mark 4: 1-34
VIII.	Stilling of the tempest . . .	Sea of Galilee	Autumn, 28	Mark 4: 35-41
IX.	Healing a demoniac . . .	Gergesa	Autumn, 28	Mark 5: 1-20
	Jairus's daughter raised to life . . .	Capernaum	Autumn, 28	Mark 5: 21-43
X.	The Twelve sent forth . . .	Galilee	Winter, 29	Mark 6: 6-13
XI.	Death of John the Baptist . . .	Machærus	Mar., 29	Mark 6: 14-29
	Feeding of the Five Thousand . .	Bethsaida	April, 29	Mark 6: 30-46
XII.	Walking on the water . . .	Sea of Galilee	April, 29	Mark 6: 47-52
	Jesus teaches sincerity . . .	Capernaum	April, 29	Mark 7: 1-23
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I.	Jesus foretells his death . . .	Philippi	Summer, 29	Mark 8: 27-37
III.	The transfiguration . . .	Philippi	Summer, 29	Mark 9: 2-13
	The mission of the seventy . . .	Peræa	Nov.-Dec., 29	Luke 10: 1-24
IV.	The raising of Lazarus . . .	Bethany	Feb., 30	John 11: 1-46
	Jesus and the home . . .	Peræa	Mar., 30	Mark 10: 1-16
V.	The rich young ruler . . .	Peræa	Mar., 30	Mark 10: 17-31
VI.	Request of James and John . . .	Peræa	Mar., 30	Mark 10: 35-45
VII.	Triumphal entry . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 2, 30	Mark 11: 1-11
VIII.	Teaching in the temple . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 4, 30	Mark 12: 13-44
	The wicked husbandmen . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 4, 30	Mark 12: 1-12
X.	The Lord's Supper . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 6, 30	Mark 14: 1-42
XI.	The arrest and trial . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 7, 30	Mark 14: 43-15: 15
	The crucifixion . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 7, 30	Mark 15: 16-47
XII.	The resurrection . . .	Jerusalem	Apr. 9, 30	Mark 16: 1-20
	The forty days . . .	Galilee, Judæa	Apr.-May, 30	Mark 16: 15-18
	The ascension . . .	Bethany	May 18, 30	Mark 16: 19, 20

CHRONOLOGY OF PAUL'S LIFE

THIRD QUARTER LESSON	EVENTS	PLACE	DATE	REFERENCE
I.	Saul at School . . .	Tarsus and Jerusalem	A. D. 1 to 20?	Acts 22: 3, 27, 28
	Pentecost . . .	Jerusalem	Sun., May 28, A. D. 30	Acts 2: 1-13
II.	Peter and John imprisoned . . .	Jerusalem	A. D. 30	Acts 4: 1-22
	Apostles imprisoned . . .	Jerusalem	A. D. 34	Acts 5: 17-42
III.	Martyrdom of Stephen . . .	Jerusalem	A. D. 36	Acts 6: 8-7: 60
	Conversion of Saul . . .	Damascus	A. D. 36	Acts 22: 3-16
IV.	Saul in Arabia . . .	Arabia	A. D. 36-38	Gal. 1: 17, 18
	Saul's early ministry . . .	Damascus, Jerusalem, Tarsus, Antioch	A. D. 38-43	Acts 9: 19-30; 11: 19-30
V.	Saul and Barnabas appointed missionaries . . .	Antioch	A. D. 47	Acts 13: 1-3
VI.	First missionary journey . . .	Cyprus, Asia Minor	A. D. 47-49	Acts 13: 4-14: 28
VII.	The first church council . . .	Jerusalem	A. D. 50	Acts 15: 1-35
	Second missionary journey begun . . .	Asia Minor	A. D. 50	Acts 15: 36-16: 4

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CHRONOLOGY OF PAUL'S LIFE. *(Continued)*

THIRD QUARTER LESSON	EVENTS	PLACE	DATE	REFERENCE
VIII.	Paul enters Europe	Philippi	A. D. 50, 51	Acts 16: 6-15
IX.	Paul imprisoned	Philippi	A. D. 51	Acts 16: 16-40
X.	Paul in Thessalonica and Berea	Thessalonica, Berea	A. D. 51	Acts 17: 1-15
XI.	Paul in Athens and Corinth 1 and 2 Thessalonians written .	Athens, Corinth	A. D. 51, 52	Acts 17: 16-18: 17
XII.	First Corinthians written . . .	Corinth	A. D. 52	
XIII.	The same (see below)	Ephesus	A. D. 56	1 Cor. 1-4
	Third missionary journey begun.	Asia Minor	A. D. 53	1 Cor. 8: 1-13 Acts 18: 23
FOURTH QUARTER				
I.	Paul in Ephesus	Ephesus	A. D. 53-56	Acts 19: 1-41
II.	First Corinthians written . . .	Ephesus	A. D. 56	1 Cor. 12-14
III.	Second Corinthians written . .	Macedonia	A. D. 57	2 Cor. 8: 1-9: 15
V. VI.	Paul three months in Greece . .	Corinth	A. D. 57	
IV. VIII.	Galatians and Romans written Paul's Journey to Jerusalem .	Corinth Miletus, etc.	A. D. 57	Rom. 13: 1-14; 12: 1-21
VII.	Paul arrested in Jerusalem . .	Jerusalem	A. D. 57	Acts 20: 1-21: 17
IX.	Paul before Felix and Festus . .	Cæsarea	A. D. 58, 59	Acts 21: 17-23: 35
X.	Paul's journey to Rome	Mediterranean	A. D. 60	Acts 24: 1-26: 32
		Malta		Acts 27: 1-28: 31
	Paul two years a prisoner . . .	Rome	A. D. 61, 62	
	Philippians written	Rome	A. D. 61, 62	
XI.	Colossians, Ephesians and Phi- lémon written	Rome	A. D. 62	Philemon 8-21
	Paul probably visits many lands, Ephesus to Spain		A. D. 63-66	
	Titus and 1 Timothy written . .		A. D. 65?	
	Paul's second imprisonment . .	Rome	A. D. 66	
XII.	Second Timothy written	Rome	A. D. 66 or 67	2 Tim. 4: 1-18
	Martyrdom of Paul	Rome	A. D. 67	

THE LESSONS FOR 1928.

The Uniform Lessons this year give a splendid sweep through the New Testament, six months in the Gospel account of the life of Christ, six months in the life and writings of Paul as recorded in the Acts and Epistles. It will be remembered that last year we had a similar study of the life and letters of Peter. As to the studies of the Gospels, in 1926 we studied the Gospel according to John, while in 1930 we are to study Matthew, and in 1931, Luke.

Mark's Gospel, so brief, so vivid, so picturesque, pulses with life in every sentence, and presents the story of the Christ with matchless clearness, simplicity and force. Luke in the Acts is the model historian, accurate, sympathetic, strong, wisely allowing the many characters of the narrative to speak for themselves. Paul in his Epistles is powerful and winsome, with all the eloquence and wisdom of a life filled with the Holy Spirit and directed by him to the most masterful of Christian enterprises. Surely we have a rich year before us. Let us use these riches to buy the souls of our pupils for their Redeemer.

THE BIBLE TEXT WE USE.

The hearty thanks of the Sunday-school world and of all users of the Bible are due to the Bible-publishing firm of Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York City. It was they who financed the making of the American Version of the Bible, and they have published that translation in many admirable styles. But they have not kept the American Version to themselves; they have presented it freely to the Christian public, for the use of all Sunday-school editors and Christian scholars. This version is used in Peloubet's Notes, and it is the version adopted by the International Sunday School Lesson Committee and by the Sunday-school boards of all denominations. It is given this prominence because it is the most accurate translation, representing most clearly what was written in the original Hebrew and Greek. That, of course, is what all lovers of the Bible wish to use.

PRIMARY AND JUNIOR ADAPTATIONS.

The International Lesson Committee no longer gives the Sunday-school world adaptation of the Uniform Lessons to the Primary and Junior grades of the Sunday school, so that all users of the Uniform Lessons — and that is the large majority of schools — owe a debt of

INTRODUCTION.

gratitude to the Sunday-School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, who prepare these adaptations with great care and skill, and who furnish them freely to the Sunday-school editors of all the denominations and to the interdenominational publishers as well. We present them in this volume, with the exception of the review lessons, which in the Southern Baptist schedule are usually set apart for strictly denominational topics. For the reviews, therefore, we usually prepare our own topics and golden texts, in harmony with the lessons of the quarter.

THE GROUNDWORK OF THE LESSON.

The teacher that means business will never be satisfied with knowing as little as possible about the lesson he is to teach: he will want to know just as much as possible about it. "Getting by" is not his teaching ideal. He wants to be primed for any chance question of a wide-awake pupil. He knows that the respect of his class for his knowledge depends more on his readiness to answer unexpected questions than on anything else.

Besides, it is fulness of knowledge that gives life and solidity to teaching. Leighton, who for so many years was the acknowledged leader of British artists, crowded his canvases with lovely figures which stood out in vivid relief. He obtained that effect by a most painstaking mode of painting. Every figure was first painted in the nude, with as careful attention to the contours as if each limb and every muscle was to remain undraped. Not until that was completed did he clothe each figure in beautiful garments, every fold of which hung just as it would in covering a living body. With equal care the teacher, who would have the gospel truths stand out in living beauty before his pupils, must prepare the groundwork.

This is why these "Notes" are so full. This is why we take so much pains to give the background of every lesson, — the historical background, the geographical setting, the facts in regard to Oriental customs and the exact meaning of the words and phrases of the original languages from which our translation is made, the light that is thrown on every lesson by other passages of Scripture. Not all of this can be used in the ordinary class, but all of it may be used, and the whole is enormously useful in making the lesson vital to the teacher.

For what lies back in our minds determines the confidence with which we speak. We have not time to state all the grounds of our faith, but we know that it is well-grounded and this knowledge puts firmness into our words and renders them faith-producing in others. The feeling with which we speak is quite as important as what we have time to say — a fact which many teachers and public speakers leave out of account.

So let all Sunday-school teachers fill their mental reservoirs to the top. It is the overflow of a mill-pond which gives driving force to the wheels. It is the exuberant surplus of knowledge and thought which bestows momentum upon our teaching. Let our motto be, not "As little as will answer" but "As much as we can!"

EVERY TEACHER AN ASSISTANT TEACHER.

No teacher will do his best work until he realizes that it is not really he that is teaching but the Holy Spirit, to whom he is only an assistant. It is the work of the third person of the Trinity, as our Lord himself has said, to take the things of Christ and show them to us — to teacher and pupil both. He is the Enlightener, and if we attempt to be, our work is only darkness. He is the Sustainer, and if we try to do our work in our own strength we shall fail lamentably.

The teacher that relies on the Holy Spirit as his Over-teacher will have great peace in his teaching. He will not worry about the impression he is making on his class, for he will not try to make any personal impression at all; he will simply seek humbly to make himself the instrument through which the Holy Spirit will make the impression he desires to make. If the pupils, in spite of all he can do, are restless, inattentive, irreverent, and mischievous, he will remember that the Holy Spirit is the Convicter, the Subduer to himself, and will peacefully leave results with him.

This, of course, is by no means to say that the teacher will do no studying, prepare no plans, be merely passive in God's hands, just stand aside and see what the Holy Spirit will accomplish. The Spirit will accomplish nothing without his assistant. If we do not do our share, and do it actively and faithfully and hopefully and lovingly, he cannot accomplish the results through us. On the contrary, because we are assistants to such a Head we are to labor the more strenuously, proud of our honor and seeking to make ourselves in every way worthy of the glorious partnership to which we have been admitted.

But, this being said and always insisted upon, every teacher has a right to rest in the

INTRODUCTION.

knowledge that he is only an assistant teacher. He has a right to take to the Teacher all his problems, of understanding or of practice. He has a right, after he has done his best, to be at peace and satisfied though the result may appear to be absolute failure. He has a right to trust the Teacher whom he is assisting, to lean on his assured providences, and calmly to leave his work and his pupils to his all-wise and all-loving disposition. Happy his lot who is guided by such a Director and subordinate to such a Chief.

FIFTY-TWO ENVELOPES.

The teachers who always have their quivers full of arrows are those who go through the year looking for them and fashioning them. Original and effective workers along any line are at it all the time. Their efforts are never impromptu, however they may seem so. The ideas they pour forth as from an artesian well are rather from a reservoir which has been long in filling. Nothing in teaching just happens; all is a matter of careful and patient preparation.

There is no better way, we think, of gathering material for the fifty-two lessons of a year (sometimes, as in the present year, fifty-three, but we will say fifty-two as that is the usual number of Sundays) than the following.

Get fifty-two stout envelopes, long, and open on the long side. Print on these very plainly the dates of the Sundays of the year, and also for each Sunday the subject of the lesson and the Bible reference for the day. If the subject of the lesson is not self-explanatory, print below it the real theme of the lesson, or the theme you intend to emphasize in your teaching. There may be several of these themes in a lesson.

For instance, the subject of the last lesson of this year (before the review) is "Paul's Last Message, 2 Tim. 4: 1-18." Under that title you may write or print on the envelope these points to be emphasized: "The ideal Christian worker. Fighting the good fight. Finishing the course. Keeping the faith. The crown of the faithful."

During the year, in all your reading, whatever you come across that will help in illuminating any lesson will be clipped or copied and contributed to its appropriate envelope. All the information about Bible places, people, and customs will be fitted in, every helpful thought, interesting suggestion, inspiring poem; especially every illuminating anecdote. If it looks as if it ought to be used in teaching your class, hunt until you have found an appropriate place for it.

At first you will not be familiar with the many titles, but as you go on in the year they will come readily to mind, and the material for them will accumulate at an amazing rate. From your own experience and the experience of others will come many illustrations which will carry vitality. You will gather many more as you read the newspapers. Books will furnish others. You will think of teaching plans, which will be jotted down and filed in the appropriate envelopes. Your collection of clippings will increase rapidly. Some envelopes will become even too full, and you will have more than you need, place for the surplus to be found in later weeks. This method will grow in favor with you as you use it, and about halfway through the year you will lay out your fifty-two envelopes for the year 1929.

EXPECT GREAT THINGS.

The motto of William Carey, the pioneer of modern missions, was: "Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God." The maxim fits a Sunday-school teacher as well as a missionary. He also has a right to expect great results from his labors, but only as his labors seek great results, and only as God is in it all, both his attempts and his expectations.

Of the three things which "abide," faith, hope, and love, the second is most often neglected by Christians. We forget its position in that exalted trio. We know that love is the greatest of all, we rank faith next to love, and we leave hope quite out of account. But it is perfectly certain that if we do not expect great results from our teaching, no great results will come from it; and it is certain also that if our teaching is not buoyed up by a splendid hope, it will lack the joy which it should be giving us all the time.

The great things which we should expect from our teaching are the conversion of our pupils and the transformation of their lives by the grace, beauty, and strength which Christ is so ready to give them. The great things which we are to attempt for our pupils as precedent to the great things we expect are the winning of their attention, the winning of their interest, and the winning of their affection. We shall seek to arouse their interest in the Bible, we shall attempt to lead them along the pathway of prayer, we shall try to set them to work in the kingdom. These are all great things, and as we succeed in these endeavors we shall begin to obtain the great results for which we hope.

INTRODUCTION.

Magnificent work, this Sunday-school teaching. Nothing small about it, either in prospect or realization. We are dealing with the mightiest forces in the universe. We are attempting the most difficult of all tasks. We are expecting the most glorious rewards.

THE TEACHER A FRIEND.

If the pupils feel that their teacher is their friend, they will attend his every word and he will become a true leader of their lives. If the teacher holds before himself the ideals of friendship in his relations with his pupils, he is in a fair way to become an ideal teacher. It is no accident that Christ, the greatest of all teachers, talked so much of friendship with his disciples. "I have called you friends," he said to them; and "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." He said there was no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends; and that was what he intended to do for them.

Following the supreme example, then, the true teacher will try to be a true friend of every one of his pupils. Friends spend themselves for one another, and he will spend and be spent for his class. Friends think not of themselves but of their friends, and he will not think of himself as he teaches, whether he is succeeding or failing, but only of the success or failure of his pupils. Friends live in their friends' joys and sorrows, and so the teacher will by imagination and sympathy make his pupils' joys and sorrows his very own. Differences in age and in social condition, in experience and in knowledge, will be no barrier to this friendship, which can exist as truly between an old man and a boy as between two adults, and between an admired scholar and an earnest beginner as between Plato and Socrates. Indeed, even the indifference of the pupil will not prevent this friendship, for who said that friendship must be two-sided? When we were yet enemies, Christ died for us.

If a teacher really loves his pupils, they will know it, and in time, if not at once, they will return his love. The human heart may be a very blurred mirror, but friendship is a light which clears the mirrors on which it falls. Just as we love because Christ first loved us, so many a pupil loves his teacher because the teacher first loved him.

And if any teacher finds any pupil so unlovely that it is hard for him to feel friendship for the pupil, then the teacher must seek love, not from the pupil, but from the Infinite Lover. Christ is the great reservoir of love, and if we open our hearts to him, he will fill us with love to all his creatures.

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SOME OF THE MANY STUDIES OF CHRIST'S LIFE. Headlam's *The Life and Teachings of Jesus the Christ* (Oxford). Anderson's *The Man of Nazareth* (Macmillan). Garvie's *Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus* (Doran). Brown's *The Master's Way* (Pilgrim Press). Nicoll's *The Incarnate Saviour* (American Tract Society). Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Jesus* (Scribner). Horr's *The Great Ministry*. Headlam's *Jesus Christ in History and Faith* (Harvard University Press). Ault's *The Poets' Life of Christ* (Oxford). Selbie's *Aspects of Christ* (Doran). Whyte's *The Walk, Conversation, and Character of Jesus Christ Our Lord* (Revell). Farrar's *The Life of Lives* (Barton). Bryan's *Christ and His Companions* (Revell). Grose's "Never Man So Spake" (Doran). Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows* (Bobbs Merrill). Morgan's *The Crises of the Christ* (Revell). Humphreys's *The Unknown Years of Jesus* (Abba Company). Wilson's *The Christ We Forget* (Revell). Smith's *The Days of His Flesh* (Doran). Boulting's *The Beautiful Childhood* (Harcourt, Brace & Co.). Stevenson's *The Christ of the Children* (Doran). Temple's *Christ the Truth* (Macmillan). Oxenham's *The Hidden Years* (Longmans). Wright's *The Heart of the Master* (Houghton Mifflin Co.). Sanday's *Outlines of the Life of Christ* (Scribner) and *The Life of Christ in Recent Research* (Oxford). Hill's *Mountain Peaks in the Life of Our Lord* (Revell). Evans's *Epochs in the Life of Christ* (Revell). Summerbell's *Christ in Word and Work* (Antioch Press). Orr's *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (Scribner). *The Life of the Master*, by John Watson, "Ian Maclaren" (McClure, Phillips & Co.). Farrar's *Christ in Art* (A. & C. Black). La Farge's *The Gospel Story in Art* (Macmillan). Bailey's *The Gospel in Art* (Pilgrim Press). French's *Christ in Art* (Page). Sparrow's *The Gospels in Art* (Hodder & Stoughton). Hurl's *The Life of Our Lord in Art* (Houghton Mifflin Co.). Tissot's *Life of Jesus Christ* (Werner).

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COMMENTARIES ON THE EPISTLES. By many writers, in *The Expositor's Bible*, *The New-Century Bible*, *The Cambridge Bible*, *The Bible for Home and School*, *The Pulpit Commentary*, *Ellicott's Bible Commentary*, *Speaker's Bible* (Blessing), etc. Carroll (Revell). Boise's *Notes* (Silver, Burdett & Co.). Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. Also innumerable volumes on the separate Epistles, many of which are mentioned in the different lessons. Fox's *The Spiritual Grasp of the Epistles* (Partridge). Godet's *Studies in the Epistles* (Dutton). Maclaren's *Expositions*.

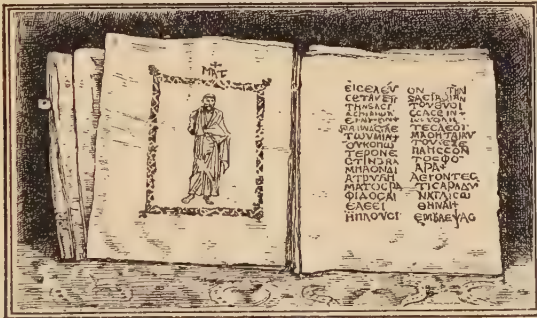
LIVES OF PAUL. The latest and one of the very best is *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, by Prof. David Smith, D.D. (Doran); it is large, complete, and very satisfactory. Other valuable lives of Paul are those by Stalker (American Tract Society), Iverach (Revell), Baring-Gould (Isbister), Wood (Headley), Farrar (Dutton), Fouard (Longmans), Bird (Scribner), Burrell (American Tract Society), Meyer (Revell), Ligon (Revell), Conybeare and Howson (Scribner). Pell's *The Story of Paul as Told by Himself* (Revell). Stevenson's *The Children's Paul* (Doran).

INTRODUCTION.

OTHER BOOKS ON PAUL. Jefferson's *The Character of Paul* (Macmillan). Speer's *The Man Paul* (Revell). Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul* (Putman). Pounder's *St. Paul and His Cities* (Pilgrim Press). Selden's *In the Time of Paul* (Revell). Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul* (Herrick). Howson's *Character of St. Paul* (Dodd, Mead & Co.). Buell's *The Autographs of St. Paul* (Methodist Book Concern). Gardner's *Religious Experience of St. Paul* (Putman). Thatcher's *The Apostolic Church* (Houghton Mifflin Co.). Faris's *The Christian according to Paul* (Association Press). Dudley's *St. Paul's Friendships and His Friends* (Badger). Garvie's *Studies of Paul and His Gospel* (Doran). Ramsay's *The Church in the Roman Empire, The Teaching of Paul, St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen, The Cities of St. Paul* (Doran). Kuist's *The Pedagogy of St. Paul* (Doran). Squires's *Paul the Traveller and Missionary* (Westminster Press). Adams's *The Heralds of the King* (Badger). Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church* (Sunday School Times Co.). Bruce's *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity* (Scribner). Robertson's *Paul's Joy in Christ* (Revell). Jones's *St. Paul the Orator* (Doran). Redlich's *St. Paul and His Companions* (Macmillan). Lees's *St. Paul and His Converts* (Scott). Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Paul* (Scribner). Weinell's *St. Paul: the Man and His Work* (Putnam). Machen's *The Origin of Paul's Religion* (Macmillan). Jones's *St. Paul the Hero* (Macmillan). Knowling's *The Testimony of St. Paul to Christ* (Scribner).

PASS THIS BOOK ALONG.

Many teachers keep their copies of Peloubet's Notes for reference in later years, as each volume contains absolutely new material, not copying the commentary of former years. If you are not of that number, but throw away the volume after using it one year, you will be glad to know of the Surplus Material Department of the World's Sunday School Association. This department is conducted by Rev. Samuel D. Price, D.D., whose address is 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York, N. Y. Write to him, and he will send you the name and address of some missionary to whom you can send the book, for the missionaries find Peloubet's Notes of the greatest usefulness in their arduous labors. Dr. Price, in the same way, will give you missionary addresses for other used Sunday-school material, such as Sunday-school papers, books, pictures of Bible scenes and events, song books, Christmas and Easter exercises, scrapbooks, and quarterlies. But note that none of this material is to be sent to Dr. Price, for he does not forward; you are to do the forwarding to the addresses which he will furnish you.



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- Lesson 3*
686 Jesus Heals the Man with the Palsy. Bida.
- Lesson 4*
698 The Man with the Withered Hand. Bida.
- Lesson 5*
76 Jesus Preaches from a Boat. Hofmann.
- Lesson 6*
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182 Nazareth and the Hill Country.
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- Lesson 11*
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635 The Christ. Bida.
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Second Quarter.

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152 Thereon they crucified him. Morris.
- Lesson 2*
341 Holy Women at the Tomb. Ender.
- Lesson 3*
89 The Transfiguration. Raphael.
- Lesson 4*
97 Jesus and the Child. Ballheim.
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112 Christ and the Rich Ruler. Hofmann.
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126 Tribute to Caesar. Titian.
- Lesson 9*
731 The Parable of the Vineyard.
- Lesson 10*
131 The Last Supper. Da Vinci.
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141 Trial before Pilate. Munkacsy.
- Lesson 12*
149 The Crucifixion. Munkacsy.
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Third Quarter.

- Lesson 1*
795 Ancient Method of Tentmaking.
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392 The Stoning of Stephen. Beato Angelico.
396 St. Stephen Preaching and before the council Beato Angelico.
- Lesson 3*
284 Conversion of St. Paul. Raphael.
- Lesson 4*
768 Paul let down in a basket.
- Lesson 5*
461 Elymas struck with blindness. Raphael.
- Lesson 6*
286 Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. Raphael.
- Lesson 7*
192 Jerusalem. From the Mount of Olives.
- Lesson 8*
764 "The Place of Prayer by the Riverside."
- Lesson 9*
738 Conversion of the Philippian Jailor.
- Lesson 10*
445 St. Paul Preaching to the Thessalonians. Doré.
- Lesson 11*
460 Paul Preaching at Athens. Raphael.
- Lesson 12*
456 The Acro Corinthus, Corinth.
- Lesson 13*
670 Temperance Pledge
- Lesson 14*
Review.

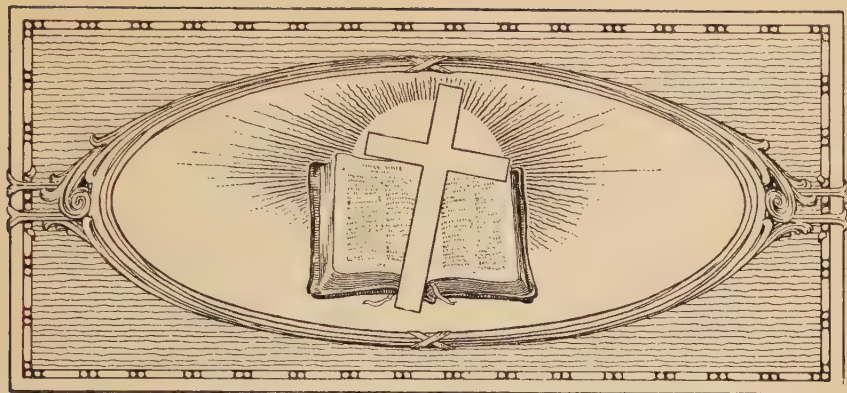
Fourth Quarter.

- Lesson 1*
449 St. Paul Preaching at Ephesus. Lesueur.
- Lesson 2*
652 Charity of St. Martin. Michel.
- Lesson 3*
648 St. Paul Takes Leave of Ephesus. Artist unknown.
- Lesson 4*
Map of St. Paul's Missionary Journeys.
- Lesson 5*
806 The Statue of Laocoön.
- Lesson 6*
797 The Peace Statue, "Christ of the Andes."
- Lesson 7*
446 St. Paul rescued from the multitude. Doré.
- Lesson 8*
452 St. Paul. Fra Bartolommeo.
- Lesson 9*
771 Paul before Agrippa.
- Lesson 10*
773 Paul Reaches Rome in Chains. Julius von Schnorr.
- Lesson 11*
598 St. Paul casting off the viper.
- Lesson 12*
799 St. Luke the Evangelist. Bida.
- Lesson 13*
792 Training for Olympic Games.
12 The Nativity. Carl Muller
- Lesson 13*
Review.



JOHN THE BAPTIST.

ANDREA DEL SARTO.



FIRST QUARTER.

JANUARY 1 — MARCH 25, 1928.

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD.

STUDIES IN MARK.

(FIRST HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

AIM: FOR INTERMEDIATES AND SENIORS: To develop in the minds and hearts of the pupils a higher appreciation of Jesus' character and ministry as set forth in Mark's Gospel, and deeper loyalty to him as Lord and Master.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS: To discover, through a study of a series of vivid pictures of Jesus' deeds of power and of his teachings as contained in the Gospel of Mark, the basis of the writer's conviction that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

LESSON I. — January 1.

JOHN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS. — Mark 1: 1-13.

PRINT vs. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He must increase, but I must decrease.* — JOHN 3: 30.

Devotional Reading: Isa. 40: 3-11.

Additional Material for Teachers: Mark 6: 14-29.

Primary Topic: JOHN TELLS ABOUT JESUS.

Lesson Material: Mark 1: 1-11.

Memory Verse: Behold I send my messenger before thy face. Mark 1: 2.

Junior Topic: JOHN WELCOMES AND BAPTIZES JESUS.

Lesson Material: Mark 1: 1-11.

Memory Verse: Mark 1: 11.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS.

Topic for Young People and Adults: JOHN HERALDS THE MIGHTY ONE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes may be told to listen to the story of a great hero of long ago, and that after you have told the story you will ask one of them to tell it over again to the class. Make the story as vivid as you can, and you may go to the very close of John's life in order to

show what a heroic man this herald of Jesus was. Before the pupil begins to repeat the story after you, ask the members of the class to listen carefully and be ready, when he is through, to add any details he may have omitted.

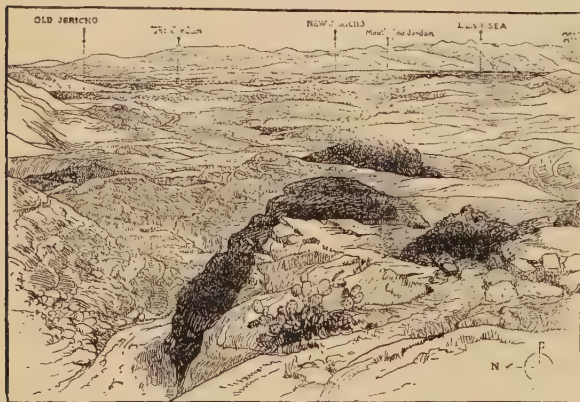
The Older Classes will find in John the Baptist a great preacher of social righteousness. He prepared the way for

Christ by arousing the people's consciences and making them feel their need of a Saviour. He was the subject of prophecy, and this element in his life should not be forgotten. He emphasized baptism, and the class will discuss the importance of this ordinance. At Christ's baptism the Father gave a wonderful testimony to Christ's deity, and that great doctrine should be treated. Thus the lesson involves four major topics, which may be assigned to four members of the class for four essays or talks.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
If John the Baptist were preaching today, what social sins would he attack ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The ministry of John the Baptist was from the summer of A.D. 26



Pictorial Map of the Wilderness of Judaea.

to March, A.D. 28. The baptism of Jesus was in January, A.D. 26.

Place. — John preached in the wilderness of Judaea, west of the lower Jordan and the Dead Sea. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, probably east of Jericho.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

John the Baptist compared with Elijah.
John's preaching compared with Christ's.
Prophecies of John in the Old Testament.
References to baptism in the New Testament.
The mode of baptism.
Proofs of the deity of Christ.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : John Prepares the Way for Jesus.

I. JOHN PREACHING, vs. 1-6.

The Gospel of Mark.
The birth of John the Baptist.
The throngs in the wilderness.
Repentance, confession, remission.

II. JOHN PROPHECYING, vs. 7, 8.

The Mightier coming.
The baptism of the Spirit.
The Christian ordinance of baptism.

III. JOHN BAPTIZING, vs. 9-13.

Why Christ was baptized.
The testimony from heaven.
Jesus the Son of God.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Mark by Maclear (*Cambridge Bible*), Jacobus (*Bible for Home and School*), Salmond (*New-Century Bible*), Ballantine (*Modern American Bible*), the Dean of Ely (*Temple Bible*), Milner (*Oxford University Press*), Erdman (*Westminster Press*), Green (*Westminster New Testament*), Chadwick (*Expositor's Bible*), Clarke (*American Commentary*), Gould (*International Critical Commentary*), Rice (*American Sunday School Union*), Bickersteth (*Pulpit Commentary*), Swete (*Macmillan*), Bruce (*Expositor's Greek Testament*), Bennett (*Armstrong*), Menzies (*The Earliest Gospel*), etc. Stalker's *The Two St. Johns of the New Testament*. Greenhough in *Men of the New Testament*. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.

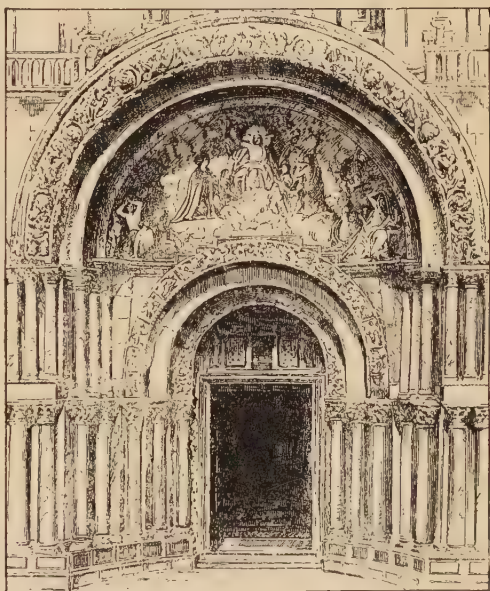
I. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

I. JOHN PREACHING, vs. 1-6. The subject of this six-months course of lessons in Mark is "The Gospel of the Son of God," a subject taken from the title of the Gospel given in the first verse. This title is further justified by the central event of this first lesson, the baptism of Jesus, after which the voice of God himself, speaking from heaven, announced that Jesus was the beloved Son of God. The main purpose of this lesson, therefore, after we get a clear view of the herald of Jesus and his message, is to consider this claim, that Jesus is the Son of God, and discover what its implications are and what duties and privileges of the Christian are involved in the doctrine. Let us seek to fill this term, for ourselves and our pupils, with greater blessedness and power than any quarter has ever had before for us and for them.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK. I. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. "The second Gospel is the Gospel of action, and it has that character for its first statement.

It opens in a way remarkable for its brevity, simplicity, and directness. It takes the shortest course to the heart of its subject — the good news of the actual advent of the Messiah." — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond*. "Gospel" is from the Anglo-Saxon "Godspell," which signifies "God-story." It translates a Greek word which means "Good news," the good news which Christ came to proclaim to men, that God is their loving Father, that he will forgive their sins, that he has sent his Son to die for our salvation. This is the best of all the news that the world has ever heard. **The Son of God.** "Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, meaning "Jehovah is my salvation." It was our Lord's *personal* name, the name given him by Joseph and Mary as bidden by the angel. "Christ" is another word of Greek form, meaning "Anointed," parallel to the Hebrew "Messiah," which has the same significance. It is our Lord's *official* name, as the ancient kings and high priests were inducted into office by being anointed, and Christ is our Great High Priest, the King of kings and Lord of lords. "Son of God" may be called the *original* name of our Saviour, the name which describes his origin, his divine name. It points out his relation to Jehovah, as his own favorite name for himself, "Son of Man," points out his relation to humanity. He was typical man, representative man, and in our stead bore the penalty of human sins.

THE WRITER OF THE SECOND GOSPEL. "Marcus was the Latin surname of the writer of the Second Gospel. He is probably the same as the 'John whose surname was Mark' of Acts 12 : 12, 25. He was the son of Mary whose house at Jerusalem was the refuge and meeting place of the early Christian community (Acts 12 : 12). Of his father is known nothing, but he was the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4 : 10) of Cyprus, the great friend of St. Paul. It was to his mother Mary's house that St. Peter, after his deliverance from prison, came as to a familiar home. This fact may explain St. Mark's intimate acquaintance with St. Peter, to whom also he probably owed his conversion, for St. Peter (1 Pet. 5 : 13) calls him his 'son.' He was 'minister' to Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey. At Perga, for some unexplained reason, he leaves them and returns to Jerusalem (Acts 13 : 13). Three years afterwards, at the beginning of their second journey, St. Paul refuses to take Mark with him as one 'who had departed from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work.' The issue was 'a sharp contention' resulting in the separation of Paul from his old friend Barnabas, who, taking Mark with him, sailed away to his home in Cyprus, leaving Paul to pursue his journey into Cilicia, with Silas as his 'minister' (Acts 15 : 39-41). At a later time, however, Mark was evidently reconciled to St. Paul, for we find him at that apostle's side during his first imprisonment at Rome (Col. 4 : 10, 11; Philem. 24). During his second imprisonment St. Paul, writing to Timothy at Ephesus, charges him to bring Mark with him to Rome on the ground that 'he was profitable unto him for the ministry' (2 Tim. 4 : 11). It seems most probable that Mark did join St. Paul at Rome, whither also St. Peter would seem to have come. Ecclesiastical tradition affirms that St. Mark was sent on a mission to Egypt by St. Peter, and there founded the church of Alexandria, suffering at that place a martyr's death. Still later legends speak of his body being removed from Alexandria to Venice, A.D. 827. The city was thus placed under his protection, the symbol of St. Mark 'the Lion' becoming the standard of the Venetian



Main Entrance of St. Mark's Cathedral, Venice.

Republic. The testimony of the early church is unanimous that the evangelist composed his Gospel under the eye and direction of St. Peter, writing at Rome, and for the benefit of the Gentile Christian church there, and in the Greek language." — *Dean of Ely.*

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SECOND GOSPEL. "(1) This Gospel was evidently written for Gentiles. It explains Jewish customs with which Gentiles might not be familiar, translates Aramaic words which might not be understood by Gentiles, uses several Latin words put into a Greek form which are not found in the other Gospels, and quotes very little from the Old Testament, no doubt for the reason that the Old Testament scriptures would be unknown books to most of his readers. (2) The events recorded in this Gospel are arranged in the order in which they occurred. (3) The perfect human nature of our Lord is clearly indicated in this Gospel: he felt hunger, weariness, anger, pity, love. (4) This Gospel is full of minute details, seeming to show that St. Mark obtained his information from an eye-witness, probably from St. Peter. (5) St. Mark notices the effect produced by our Lord's words and works." — *Rev. G. E. J. Milner.*

"Of the four Gospels, the one least frequently read or admired is that which bears the name of Mark. This was true, at least, in the earlier centuries, when the work

was regarded as merely a brief copy of Matthew or of Luke. In later years, however, a new valuation has been given to this Gospel, and it has become customary to assign to Mark the first place in time of composition, and in vigor, strength, and vividness of style, a position second to none. It is true that most of the material can be found in the other narratives; possibly not more than fifty verses could be classed as peculiar to this version of the Gospel story; nevertheless, the most familiar scenes are given such added atmosphere and color, and there are so many original touches and unique features, that the incidents assume a new character, and the figure of Christ moves before us with a majesty and a reality which are unsurpassed." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.*

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. "It was an evil time. The people of God had sunk very low both in character and in fortune. The nation was enslaved to the Roman power; and its own princes, of dubious origin, were the exact reverse of the ideals of the nation's prime. The Pharisee and the Sadducee occupied the high places of religion — the one as scribe, ruling in the synagogue, the other as priest, ruling in the temple. Life on the outside was thickly plastered over with pious rules and practices, but on the inside it was full of dead men's bones. The publican, the sinner, and the harlot vaunted their vices in the eyes of all; and the bitter critics of these abandoned classes practised the same sins in their hearts." — *James Stalker.*

Into this evil world John the Baptist was born, the herald of its Redeemer. As was fitting, his birth was attended by supernatural manifestations. Both his mother, Elisabeth, and his father, Zacharias, were of the priestly family of Aaron. Elisabeth was cousin to Mary, the mother of Jesus. To the priest Zacharias, offering incense in the Holy Place in the temple at Jerusalem, the angel Gabriel came and announced that his wife should have a son whose name should be John, who should be brought up in



From a photograph by Bonfils.
Hebron.

2. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet,
Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
Who shall prepare thy way ;
3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
Make his paths straight ;
4. John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.

strict temperance and purity as a Nazarite like Samson and Samuel, and who should prepare the way for the Messiah (Luke 1 : 8-23). Before the births of John and Jesus, Mary visited Elisabeth in her home in the hill country of Judah, perhaps Hebron, and on meeting her gave utterance to that glorious hymn, the *Magnificat*. When John was born his father Zacharias spoke that other great hymn, the *Benedictus*.

2. **Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet.** Matthew has for his main purpose the discussion of Christ's life as fulfilling the ancient Hebrew prophecies, but he is not alone in that recognition of truth. The Plan of Salvation runs all through the Bible. Mark here gives quotations from two prophets, Isaiah and Malachi, and the quotation from Malachi comes first. **Behold, I send my messenger before thy face.** The quotation is from Mal. 3 : 1. "Malachi" is a Hebrew word meaning "my messenger," and some scholars consider that the prophet used the word to designate his calling, his real name being left without mention ; but that is not probable. It was Jesus himself who first applied this prophecy to John the Baptist, Matt. 11 : 10 ; Luke 7 : 27 ; compare Mark 9 : 13. **Who shall prepare thy way.** "In the mountain regions, the washing of the hillsides by the heavy winter rains destroys each year a large portion of the best-laid roads. In the desert regions the shifting sands, and in the more fertile regions the abundant growth of weeds and shrubbery, make Eastern roads well-nigh impassable, unless care is exercised for their frequent or special clearing. In many parts of the East the ancient roads were prepared or repaired only at the special call of the king, for his special service on an exceptional occasion." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*.

3. **The voice of one crying in the wilderness.** Here begins the quotation from Isaiah (40 : 3). John was a voice, a speaker rather than a man of action ; and yet his words were deeds and every sermon was an event. The "wilderness" in which he spoke was "the dry and unpeopled region extending from the gates of Hebron to the shores of the Dead Sea. 'It is a dreary waste of rocky valleys ; in some parts stern and terrible, the rocks cleft and shattered by earthquakes and convulsions into rifts and gorges, sometimes a thousand feet in depth, though only thirty or forty in width. The whole district is, in fact, the slope of the midland chalk and limestone hills, from their highest point of nearly 3,000 feet near Hebron, to 1,000 or 1,500 feet at the valley of the Dead Sea. The Hebrews fitly call it Jeshimon (1 Sam. 23 : 19, 24), 'the appalling desolation,' or 'horror.' " — *Cambridge Bible*. **Make ye ready the way of the Lord.** "On going from Cairo to the Pyramids, over an exceptionally good road, the traveller will not fail to be told that it was built for the Prince of Wales, or for the Empress Eugenie, or for the Khedive himself, or even, rarely, for Napoleon the Great." — *Sunday School Times*. **Make his paths straight.** Crooked, winding roads are picturesque in an artist's eye, but they are enormously wasteful of land and of time. A straight road between two towns may be only half as long as a twisting road. Whenever time is a valuable factor, as in military operations, straight roads are a necessity. Therefore the Romans, desiring to strike their enemies quickly with their troops, took great pains to build throughout their empire magnificent, solid, and straight roads radiating out from Rome in all directions. Many of these remain to this day. Such roads are typical of the substantial work the Christian church should do in preparing the way for the King of kings to reach the hearts of men.

4. **John came, who baptized in the wilderness.** "Whether John's baptism was suggested by the baptism of proselytes to Judaism, or by the ceremonial 'washings' (Mark 7 : 3, 4), the prominence given to it in the narrative and his title of 'the Baptist' mark it out as a new and distinctive rite of his ministry. The immersion of his converts in the Jordan typifies not a ceremonial but a *moral* cleansing : it is a baptism characterized by repentance, accompanied by public confession (verse 5), and therefore an act directed towards and resulting in the forgiveness of sins. In Christian

5. And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and *had* a leathern girdle about his loins; and did eat locusts and wild honey.

baptism the same moral elements appear, but with the significant additions of 'the name of Jesus Christ' and 'the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2 : 38 ; 19 : 1-6)." — *Prof. S. W. Green.* And preached the baptism of repentance. The rite of baptism, John insisted, had no meaning or value apart from sincere repentance for sin. John's great word was "Repent!" The people's repentance was needed to prepare the way for the Saviour. Of the two New Testament words for "repentance" the one is here used which is literally "a change of mind." It is not merely sorrow for sin, but a new view of life and conduct, a new attitude toward God and men, toward character and duty, law and obedience. Such a change of mind, of course, will result in a change of life, in new actions, in pure, loving, and strong deeds. **Unto remission of sins.** Preparatory to the sending away of sins, leading up to that happy climax and result of repentance. Of course Christ alone could send the sins away. John's entire work was an anticipation of Christ's work.

5. And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem. Both the Pharisees and Sadducees went out to hear the great preacher (Matt. 3 : 7). The rich and poor were there, the tax-gatherers, the soldiers (Luke 3 : 10, 12, 14). John did not flatter the people, he rebuked them earnestly and sternly, and yet they flocked to him. He did not tickle their ears with fine phrases, but he roused their consciences with unsparing truths. His preaching shows to the preachers and Sunday-school teachers and Christian workers of all ages that the way to draw large numbers is to be sincere and faithful, letting the Holy Spirit speak through us. And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan. The scene of the baptisms was the plain bordering the Jordan north of where it enters the Dead Sea. **Confessing their sins.** Doubtless each person, on receiving baptism, made a public statement of his sins, expressed his sorrow for them, declared his confidence that God would wash his soul clean as the water washed his body, and promised not to commit those sins again. Such confession is part of all sincere and manly living : confession to God of the sins against God and to men of the sins against others, together with such restitution as is possible.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair. Not camel's skin, but a rough garment made of the coarse hair of camels. "The Baptist's dress was that which had been distinctive of Elijah (2 Kings 1 : 8) and perhaps had become the traditional prophetic garb (compare Zech. 13 : 4)." — *Prof. Melancthon W. Jacobus.* And had a leathern girdle about his loins. Much attention was ordinarily paid to the girdle in men's attire, as to the necktie in the modern masculine costume. It was of the finest linen or cotton, often richly embroidered with gold or silver. John's girdle, however, was like that worn by the present-day Bedouin of the desert, merely a strip of untanned leather. And did eat locusts and wild honey. He could catch the locusts, and the Levitical law recognized them as proper food (Lev. 11 : 22). He could find plentiful store of wild-bee honey in the caves and holes of the rocky crags which abound in the Judæan wilderness. The locusts were eaten with salt, sometimes pounded and ground, mixed with flour and water, and then baked in cakes.

REPENTANCE, CONFESSION, REMISSION. "What is repentance?" said the superintendent; and a little girl gave the wise answer, "It is being sorry enough to quit."

"Repentance without amendment is like continual pumping in a ship without stopping the leaks." — *Palmer.*

"Repentance is toward God and not toward punishment." — *Pentecost.*

"The opportunity and ability to repent is one of the highest privileges that God has granted to man." — *E. Peabody.*

"If we put off repentance another day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in." — *W. Mason.*

Gladstone knew how to admit that he was in the wrong, confess, and apologize; but he tried to keep clear of the necessity for such a step. "You can't unpull a man's nose," he once said.

"The same moment which brings the consciousness of sin ought to bring also the confession and the consciousness of forgiveness." — *Hannah Whitall Smith.*

7. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8. I baptized you in water ; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.

"Admiral Sir George Tryon, who by a terrible mistake caused the loss of H. M. S. *Victoria*, had the reputation of being a very brave man. Never, however, did he show his courage so much as when, just before going down with the ship, he said to the staff-commander, 'It was entirely my own doing, entirely my fault.' This confession in those awful last moments recalls the words of another leader, King David, who was too brave to blame any one but himself : 'Lo, I have sinned ; but these sheep, what have they done ?' (2 Sam. 24 : 17)" — *Sunday School Chronicle*.

"Is it not a presumptuous thing to ask that our deliberate sins be forgiven ? It would be presuming but for one fact : God asks us to do it. Therefore it is more presumptuous to question God's right to ask us to do this than it is to do it." — *Sunday School Times*.

"Oh, the freedom with which the gates of the divine forgiveness are thrown open ! The Bible trembles and burns and overruns with offers !" — *Phillips Brooks*.

"Our sins will never return to plague us. All eternity will not be long enough for them to come back from the place whither God has removed them." — *Pentecost*.

"When the black city river runs into the sea it is swallowed up in the crystal depths, utterly lost, nothing is seen in the ocean but purest tints. When the city smoke ascends into the sky, it is forthwith lost in the eternal blue of the firmament. So the love of God, so the merit of Christ, are wider than the sea, higher than the sky, and our sins are blotted out." — *William L. Watkinson*.

"My God, my God, have mercy on my sin,
For it is great ; and if I should begin
To tell it all, the day would be too small
To tell it in.

"My God, thou wilt have mercy on my sin
For thy love's sake ; yea, if I should begin
To tell this all, the day would be too small
To tell it in." — *Christina G. Rossetti*.

II. JOHN PROPHECYING, vs. 7, 8. 7. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I. There are few ways in which a truly great man more surely shows his greatness than in his humility ; he is always glad to find some one who is greater than he, wiser and stronger, some one who can do things impossible to him that need to be done, some one who can teach him and the world something not known before. John was a masterful man, and especially master in his eagerness to discover the Master of masters.—The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. Our word "lace" in "shoelace" has the same origin as "latchet." Like the word "latch," it means whatever catches and holds. The latchet was the leather thong which bound the sandal to the foot, and it was a slave's task, as the footsore traveller entered, to loosen the latchets, remove the sandals, and bathe the hot and dusty feet. This humble task was performed by Jesus for the quarreling disciples before the Lord's Supper. Note the characteristic vividness of Mark's language, "to stoop down and unloose."

8. I baptized you in water ; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit. John was the Baptizer. The most conspicuous sign of his ministry was baptism. He drew great crowds to the ceremony, and made it the symbol of the repentance and purification which he required of the nation. But he shows his humility and insight by proclaiming that even in this regard, his loftiest claim to honor and fame, he would



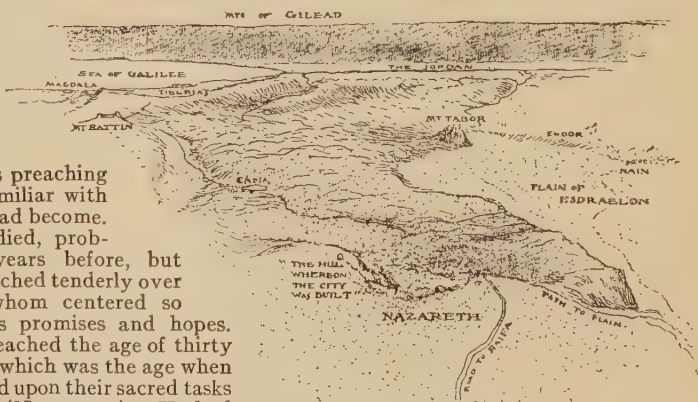
Sandals and Shoe Latches.

9. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan.

be surpassed by his successor. The baptism over which he presided was an exterior symbol, but Christ's baptism would supply the inner reality. He urged repentance and amendment, but Christ bestowed the spiritual purification which washed away sin and the spiritual power which enabled men to live a renewed life. Christ's baptism was in water, but that would have had no efficacy if it had not been also in the Holy Spirit, surrounded by him, buried in him, risen in him to the second birth.

THE CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM. Baptism is "the rite of washing with water as a sign of religious purification and consecration." — *Davis's Bible Dictionary*. The eminent missionary to Korea, Dr. Horace G. Underwood, once told at a Student Volunteer convention the following incident illustrative of the inner meaning of baptism: "A copy of the Book of the Acts fell into the hands of a Korean, whose heart was touched by the truths. He gathered his villagers together and taught them its contents and they sent for missionaries to come to them. It was impossible for them to go at once, but they sent copies of the Gospels. The eager Koreans read and studied as well as they could alone, and noticing that some 'washing rite' was enjoined upon the believers in the Jesus doctrine, they met to discuss how they should follow it out and thus fulfil all righteousness. They prayed over it for a time, and at last decided that each should go to his own home and reverently should wash himself in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." In this feeling around of the Koreans after the meaning of Christ in the matter of baptism they teach all of us a lesson. They wanted to do Christ's will, and they perceived that his will included the ordinance of baptism, and they obeyed Christ as far and as fast as they understood him. Let us, with our fuller understanding, obey him more completely, but as promptly as they did.

III. JOHN BAPTIZING, vs. 9-13. 9. And it came to pass in those days. The days of John's preaching and baptizing. That Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee. In that obscure village of Palestine's northern division our Lord had spent his boyhood and young manhood. It was situated among the northern hills overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon, the most extensive plain in the Holy Land, a stretch of country crowded with historic memories. Especially notable was Gideon's victory with his little, chosen band. Westward was Mt. Carmel, where Elijah had triumphed over the priests of Baal. At Nazareth Jesus had learned Joseph's trade of carpentering, and it is a tradition that he became especially skilful in the making of yokes. He had attended the synagogue school and his preaching shows how familiar with the Bible he had become. Joseph had died, probably many years before, but Mary had watched tenderly over the lad in whom centered so many glorious promises and hopes. He had now reached the age of thirty (Luke 3: 23), which was the age when Levites entered upon their sacred tasks in the temple (Num. 4: 3). He had many opportunities to talk with travellers, and had heard of the wonderful preaching of his cousin according to the flesh, so that he set out on foot for the south country, eager to join in the new religious movement. As at the age of twelve, so now, he knew that his place was where they were talking about his Father and were concerned to advance the Father's business. And was baptized of John in the Jordan. The place was Bethabara (Bethany),



Pictorial Map of Nazareth.

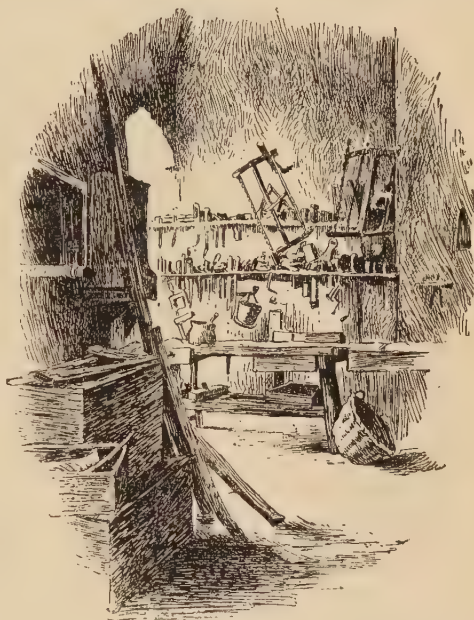
10. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him :

11. And a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

John 1 : 28, which was the ancient ford of the Jordan near Succoth, or more likely further south at the famous ford near Jericho where Joshua and his host crossed along a dry path miraculously prepared for them. Matt. 3 : 13 tells us that the chief purpose of Christ's journey was to receive baptism of John ; that John protested, saying that it would be more suitable for Christ to baptize him than he Christ ; and that Jesus bade him proceed, since it behooved him to " fulfil all righteousness."

10. **And straightway.** This vigorous adverb is one of Mark's favorite words, used over and over in his Gospel. He may well have learned it from the forthright Peter. This is the Gospel of swift motion. **Coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder.** "He" refers to Jesus. We learn from Luke 3 : 21 that our Saviour was praying at the time, for prayer seems to have been an accompaniment of all the critical events of his life. The Son of God was shut in by his mortality, but on this glad occasion the veil of sense was swiftly parted like a curtain, and he beheld the familiar scenes of the heaven he had left, some such vision of glory and beauty and peace as will burst on our delighted eyes the other side of the gates of death. **And the Spirit as a dove descending upon him.** The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, took at this time the form of a dove to symbolize peacefulness, gentleness, meekness, and love, those qualities which were to characterize the ministry of our Lord. The appearance was an assurance to Jesus that God was with him, and from this time a new power must have infused his human life and energized his human body.

11. **And a voice came out of the heavens.** Twice again while Christ was visibly among men this divine voice testified to the Saviour : at his transfiguration (Mark 9 : 7) and in the temple during the closing week of his earthly life when the Greeks came to him (John 12 : 28), forerunners of all the nations of earth who were to acknowledge him as their Redeemer and Lord. **Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.** We are not told that any but John the Baptist beheld the descent of the Spirit (John 1 : 32), but as he saw it, others also may have witnessed the wonderful occurrence. So also we are not told that any but Jesus heard the confirmatory voice, but we may infer that it was heard by all present. To Christ it was a reminder of the long ages of blissful association with the Father, from the creation of the world and throughout the eternal past, and it was also an assurance that the Father's love which had been with him always in the heavenly places would be with him still in the confinement of our human lot, and even as he took upon him the defilement and horrible weight of our human sin. "He had laid himself and his life at the feet of the Righteous Judge, and Infinite Holiness had set upon him the seal of its approval. He had humbled himself under the mighty hand of God, and had been lifted up." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett.*



From a photograph.
A Carpenter's Shop in Nazareth.

THE TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS. After his baptism Jesus passed through a mysterious and momentous experience. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who had united himself with him, he went out into the wild and lonely country from which John the Baptist had come, and there for forty days he pondered the course of life which lay before him. His soul was open to the assaults of the arch enemy of man, the Adversary, the spirit of evil, who through those forty days of fasting and solitude assailed the Son of God with all the seductive temptations of the physical senses, of worldly ambition, and of the lowering of spiritual standards. They were typical temptations, addressed to him as typical Man. Each as it came up was met firmly by the word of God, by mighty sentences from the Scriptures. We may be sure also they they were all met by prayer, and by the reinforcement of the Holy Spirit. All

of these resources are freely offered to us in our struggles with temptation, and as we use them we also, like Jesus, may come off more than conquerors.

JESUS THE SON OF GOD. A young man came occasionally to sing to an evangelistic meeting held for working-men. He had a good voice, and all the gospel workers had no thought but that he was an earnest Christian. But one evening a friend of one of the evangelists happened to be present, and after the meeting said of the singer, "I don't think the young man who sings the solos is a Christian." Greatly surprised, the evangelist asked for a reason. "Because," was the reply, "when he sings those hymns he does not put enough emphasis on the word Jesus." The evangelist tried to convince his friend that he was in the wrong, but in vain, and at last decided to ask the young man himself, when he learned that he really was not converted. So the evangelist labored with him, and met with a happy success. Now that young man, when he sings, puts all the emphasis on the incom-



Fords of the Jordan near Jericho.

parable name of the Saviour. No one can exalt him too highly. He is the Son of Man. He is the King of kings. He is our Teacher, our Leader, our Master. He is the Son of God. In him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead.

A learned man, who had spent his life in attacking Christ and Christianity, in his old age began to doubt his doubts. Often he would stop before a picture of Jesus and say, "After all, you were only a man!" Then, "What do you say? That you came from above? How you look at me! But you are only a man, after all." Then he would go away, but soon with faltering steps he would return and address the picture: "What! Are you really, then, the Son of God?" No one can think long about Jesus without coming to that conclusion.

LESSON II. — January 8.

JESUS AND THE SICK. — Mark I : 21-45.

PRINT vs. 21-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.* — MARK 7 : 37.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 103 : 1-8.

Additional Material for Teachers : Mark 7 : 24-37 ; 8 : 22-26.

Primary Topic : JESUS MAKES SICK PEOPLE WELL.

Lesson Material : Mark I : 21-34.

Memory Verse : And he healed many that were sick. Mark I : 34.

Junior Topic : JESUS HEALS THE SICK.

Lesson Material : Mark I : 21-34.

Memory Verse : Mark I : 34.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS SHOWS HIS SYMPATHY AND POWER.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS' POWER TO MAKE WHOLE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes, especially those above Primary age, may like to try their hand at story-writing in connection with this lesson. Select three of the brightest and ask one of them, well in advance of the lesson, to write the story of the healing of the demoniac, the pupil imagining himself or herself to be the brother or sister of the young sufferer. In the same way the second will write the story of the healing of Peter's wife's mother, the writer speaking in the first person as if Peter or Peter's wife. The third will tell the story of the healed leper, writing in the character of a cousin of the leper.

The Older Classes will consider the three instances of healing as typical of cases where the mind was involved, temporary sicknesses, and long-time and well-seated diseases. Three different members of the class may be appointed to open the discussion of these three phases of Christ's healing work, bringing together from the Gospels the other instances of similar healing.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How far are we to depend upon faith in Christ to accomplish healing to-day ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — May, A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — Capernaum and the surrounding towns of Galilee.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

New Testament descriptions of Christ's teaching.
Demon-possession : what was it ?
Illustrations of Christ's authority.
Examples of Christ's sympathy.
Incidents showing Christ's popularity.
Leprosy in the Old and New Testaments.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Shows His Sympathy and Power.

I. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK, vs. 21-28.

Teaching with authority.
Healing with authority.
The power and authority of Jesus.

II. THE HEALING OF A FEVER, vs. 29-34.

"He took her by the hand."
"He healed many that were sick."
The sympathy of Jesus.

III. THE HEALING OF LEPROSY, vs. 35-45.

Into the next towns.
"If thou wilt." "I will."
The popularity of Jesus.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

MacGregor's *Into His Likeness*. Hanzsche's *The Great Themes of Jesus*. Jefferson's *The Character of Jesus*. Aked's *Wells and Palm Trees*. Banks's *Common Folks' Religion*. Cox's *Expositions, Vol. IV*. Jowett's *The Silver Lining*. McConnell's *A Year's Sermons*. Trumbull's *Shoes and Rations for a Long March*. Spurgeon's *Sermons, Vol. 19*. Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture*. Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. Murray's *Like Christ*. Armstrong Black's *The Evening and the Morning*. Wright's *The World to Come*.

21. And they go into Că-pēr'-nă-üm ; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

I. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK, vs. 21-28. "The work Christ did was to proclaim the good news that the Kingdom of God was absolutely pressing down upon the world, and our evangelist thinks it worth while at once to give us a specimen day of the way in which he would discharge his task, tracing the day from morning to morning. It is a Sabbath day at the little town of Capernaum." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D. D.*

21. And they go into Capernaum ("Village of Nahum"). "They" were Jesus with the two pairs of brothers, Peter and Andrew, John and James, whom Christ had just called to follow him as his disciples, and they had answered the summons gladly and promptly, having knowledge of him, for they had attended the preaching of John the Baptist with him. They had received the Baptist's testimony to him, and probably also the wonderful witness of the voice from heaven with the descent of the Holy Spirit. They were all fishers, but left their tasks and their means of livelihood at the call of the

22. And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

Master. Capernaum was their home, and had become Christ's after his own townsmen in Nazareth had driven him away. Capernaum was a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, having a Roman customs station and a Roman garrison. The city has disappeared so completely that its very site is in doubt. "Some place it at Tell Hum, at the northwest corner of the lake, some three miles south of the point where the Jordan enters. Remains of a city of some importance are found there. Others locate it at Khan Minyeh, some three miles south of Tell Hum, near the sea and not far from where the great Damascus road passed; others still put it further to the west and south." — *New Century Bible*. The location first named is most likely.

And straightway. Here again is Mark's (Peter's?) vigorous adverb, which appears also in the verse immediately preceding, and two verses back of that. Here it may mean that this was our Lord's first Sabbath in Capernaum, and on that opening Sabbath of his residence there he identified himself with the Capernaum church. We are told elsewhere that it was his custom to attend the synagogue services regularly. In this, as in the matter of baptism, our Lord "fulfilled all righteousness," and set us an

example which we shall do well to follow. **On the sabbath day.** Our Lord honored the Sabbath in all wise ways, but opposed the absurdly minute and superstitious regulations with which the scribes and Pharisees had burdened the day, thereby gaining their fierce hostility. **He entered into the synagogue.** This was the synagogue built for the Jews by the noble Roman centurion (Luke 7:5), whose beloved servant Jesus healed from a distance and whose faith in suggesting that distant healing won the Saviour's splendid praise. **And taught.** The synagogues, which were built all over Palestine, finely supplemented the national official religious services maintained in great splendor at the temple in Jerusalem. Those were services for



From a photograph by Wilson.

Ruins of a Synagogue at Capernaum.

worship, centering around the sacrifices. The synagogue services were mainly for instruction. There were prayers, the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures, and expositions of these. The services were in charge of officers called "the rulers of the synagogue," who invited any one they chose to take part. Visiting rabbis and scholars were sure to be asked to read the Scriptures and expound their meaning. Our Lord must already have gained local reputation as a man of religious power, or he would not have been asked to speak in the synagogue service.

22. **And they were astonished at his teaching.** The Greek verb expresses extreme amazement, almost "they were carried out of themselves," "they were beside themselves." **For he taught them as having authority.** Most of the synagogue instruction was not original but quoted, simply the repeating of Scripture interpretations and comments made by the famous Jewish rabbis, as if a modern preacher should make up his sermon by piecing together such commentaries as these notes on the Sunday-school lessons. But Christ, as we know, though he based his sermons on Scripture, spoke right out of his heart and mind, with a directness, originality, and power that were most refreshing, attractive, and impressive. In coming to him, his hearers came to a living well and not to a water tank. **And not as the scribes.** The scribes, sometimes called lawyers or doctors of the law, were an ancient order of religious teacher whose work was the explanation of the Jewish Scriptures, our Old Testament. They had somewhat of the functions of the preachers of to-day, the Sunday-school teachers, and the theological professors, but we have no class exactly

23. And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24. Saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nāz-ă-rēne'? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

like them. In Christ's time their teaching had degenerated into the setting forth of the endless details of Jewish traditions and prescriptions of religious rites and forms which had grown up around the simple laws of the Old Testament, and had well-nigh smothered it with senseless requirements concerning ablutions, Sabbath observance, the keeping of fasts, and the like. Jesus set his face against all such pedantic and empty folly, and the scribes as a class hated him and opposed him.

23. **And straightway.** Here again Mark's favorite connective, which gives rapidity to the sentence, but does not here indicate any promptness in the action. **There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit.** Literally, "in an unclean spirit," swallowed up and involved by the demoniac influence. The demons are called "unclean" because they incited their victim to unholy deeds and because demon-possession so often resulted from impurity. The nature of this demon-possession is much debated; some regard it as tantamount to modern insanity, others consider it a special outbreak of the spirits of evil at the time of Christ's ministry and seeking to combat it, while

still others believe that demon-possession has continued to this day in the same form as when our Lord encountered it. Dr. Nevius, the well-known missionary to China, held the third belief, and wrote a book giving many instances of modern demon-possession. **And he cried out.** Science recognizes the phenomenon of double personality, which causes a man at one time to speak and act in one character and again in a quite different character, the subject forgetting when in one state what he had done and said when in the other state. Demon-possession was somewhat, though not altogether, of that nature.

24. **Saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene?** Either the demon is speaking of himself and other demons, or the plural has reference to the evil spirit and the man tenanted by that spirit. The demon knew his foulness and Christ's absolute purity, and questioned what such a being as the Saviour was doing in a world where such a being as a devil had existence and influence. **Art thou come to destroy us?** That was exactly why Christ had come to earth (1 John 3 : 8), to destroy all the works of the devil and drive him out of the hearts of men. No one knew that better than the Adversary and his minions, and that was why they fought the Saviour so hard when he was on earth, and fight his followers so hard to-day. **I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.** This may be regarded as a Messianic title of Jesus; at any rate, it is so used by Simon Peter in John 6 : 69. The demon recognized Christ's holiness, and hated and feared him for it.



Jesus in the Synagogue.

Blda.

25. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26. And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

27. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

28. And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

25. **And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.** Literally translated, Christ bade the demon, "Be muzzled," using a word so translated in 1 Cor. 9 : 9 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 18. Our Lord's command, thus directed expressly to the demon as distinct from his victim, shows that Christ recognized the existence of the demon, and did not regard it as merely a case of insanity.

26. **And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.** Here also the separate and personal existence of the demon is recognized and insisted upon. His base and cruel spirit was not content to leave the poor sufferer, but in leaving he would do all the final damage he could, throwing the man into convulsions and almost tearing him asunder. The cry was one of hatred and rage. The devil does not leave any one readily ; whoever admits the foul fiend into his life is in for a terrific struggle before he can get rid of him.

27. **And they were all amazed.** Mark alone of New Testament writers uses this verb. It is a strong one, and pictures astonishment mingled with awe. The people saw that supernatural power had been at work before them. **Insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching!** No one could understand what had happened, and each sought light from his neighbor. At first they associated the miracle with the strange and powerful teaching which had preceded it ; and in this they were wise, for Christ worked his miracles mainly to authenticate his teachings. **With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.** Christ's teaching had astonished his hearers because of its authoritative tone (verse 22), and now his miracle-working amazed them for the same reason. "This, too, was something new. The practice of the exorcist was not unknown among the Jews of those times (compare Acts 19 : 13). But he worked painfully by magical incantations or labored formulæ. Here was one who used no such arts, but simply spoke, and it was done." — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond*. The centurion there at Capernaum gained the same idea regarding Christ's authority in the working of miracles ; see Luke 7 : 6-8.

28. **And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.** Possibly into the country surrounding Capernaum, but more likely into the country surrounding Galilee, since Matt. 4 : 24 says that Christ's fame as the result of his miracles extended into "all Syria."

THE POWER AND AUTHORITY OF JESUS. "The authority of Jesus totally amazed the men of his day. Shakespeare in Henry IV. makes Glendower say, 'I can call spirits from the vasty deep.' And Hotspur answers : 'So can I ; but will they come when you do call for them?' But Jesus not only commanded the unclean spirits ; they obeyed him. He did not assume authority ; he *had* authority." — *Rev. William Thomson Hanzsche*.

"The first miracle recorded by Mark is as a duel between Christ and the 'strong men armed,' who 'keeps his house.' The shield of the great oppressor is first struck in challenge by the champion, and his first essay at arms proves him mightiest. Such a victory well heads the chronicle." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

"The only possible authority in the realm of religion is the actual, living Christ. In point of fact, the image of Christ is more vivid in the world than is that of any other personality whatsoever." — *S. D. McConnell*.

"Of every church Jesus is the rightful Lord. A church exists only to carry out the will of Jesus. Obedience is the first law of its life, and this obedience extends to matters of detail ; for it is the duty of each church not only to do Christ's work, but to do it in Christ's way." — *Rev. G. H. C. MacGregor*.

"In Mark's very first chapter he tells you in four different places what impression Jesus made upon men. John the Baptist was a mighty man, but John said 'There is coming one mightier than I.' Jesus sees men fishing and says to them, 'Follow me,'

29. And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her:

31. And he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons.

and they leave all and follow him. He goes into the synagogue and begins to teach, and they are amazed, not at what he says, but the authoritative manner in which he says it. There is a sick man in the synagogue, and Jesus heals him, and again the people are surprised because God has given such power to a man. All the Gospels give us repeated illustrations of the power of Jesus." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

11. **THE HEALING OF A FEVER**, vs. 29-34. "We read Christ's miracles amiss unless we regard them as vestures of deeper wonders and profounder truths." — *John H. Jowett*. We are now to study another of Christ's wonderful works, and find in it still other truths about him and teachings for ourselves.

29. **And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue.** "Straightway" here teaches us a lesson. After working this stupendous miracle, following the preaching of a powerful sermon, Jesus might well have felt that he had done enough for one day; but that was not his nature. Immediately after completing one great work he passed on to another: "without haste, without rest." So will his followers press on in their work for him. **They came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.** Simon Peter was married, and this may have been his house, his brother Andrew living with him, and possibly Jesus also. James and John were friends and co-workers, and naturally paid Peter a visit to talk over what had happened in the synagogue.

30. **Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever.** The fact that Peter, the traditional founder of the Roman Catholic Church, was married makes it indeed strange that that church should forbid its clergy to marry. In 1 Cor. 9:5 Paul speaks of Peter's wife as accompanying him on his preaching tours. Doctors of the day divided fevers into "great" and "small," and Luke, the physician, says that this was a "great" fever (Luke 4:38). It was a violent seizure. Malarial fever is to this day prevalent in the marshy plain in which Capernaum was situated, and those who have suffered with that fever can testify to its severity. **And straightway they tell him of her.** Perhaps they had learned of the miracle in the synagogue, and eagerly expected him to work another wonder for the benefit of their loved one; but we are not told of any petition, merely of their giving Jesus the information. That is enough, when there is any sorrow which it is best that he should cure.

31. **And he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up.** Note the simplicity and sympathy of Christ's action. He did not stand off and bid her rise, but grasped her hand in order that the warm flow of healing strength might pass directly from him into her pain-racked body. It is loving touches such as these that dispel the fierce fevers of the world. Luke 4:39 gives us the additional information that he rebuked the fever, speaking to it as if it were a demon which had taken possession of her, much as he had just commanded the unclean spirit to leave the sufferer in the synagogue. **And the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.** It was time for the evening meal which closed the Sabbath, and the good woman, with characteristic energy, such as Peter, her son-in-law, displayed, at once set about preparing it for her household and guests. In this we see not only what a useful and practically helpful woman she was, and so worthy of Christ's aid, but also we note a strong confirmatory evidence of the miracle, since fever leaves the patient very weak and requiring a long time for convalescence; the cures of the Great Physician are immediate and complete.

32. **And at even, when the sun did set.** The Sabbath ended at sunset, and the people could not, without violating their strict Sabbath laws, carry the sick to Jesus until the Sabbath was past. Indeed, doctors were not allowed to practise on the Sabbath; but as Christ's healing was accomplished only by speaking, infraction of the Sabbath laws could not well be brought against him. His enemies, however, went to even this length of bigotry later in his ministry (Luke 13:10-17). **They brought unto him all that were sick.** The East, because of the scarcity of skillful

33. And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

physicians, the lack of sanitation, the ignorance of hygiene, the dust, heat, vermin, and crowds, is to-day afflicted with many diseases found seldom or never in our more favored land, and conditions were worse in Christ's time. Any town would instantly present a terrible array of sufferers on the mere rumor of a wonder-working healer. **And them that were possessed with demons.** The demoniacs are set off by themselves, for they were not regarded as physically or even mentally sick, but as spiritually seized upon by foul fiends. The worst of all calamities had befallen them.

33. **And all the city was gathered together at the door.** It was a narrow door in the otherwise blank wall shutting Peter's house from the street. Peter, as he told the story to Mark, recalled vividly the pushing, surging, clamoring throng, each eager applicant crying out to the healer, either for himself or for the loved one whom he had brought there.

34. **And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons.** Luke (4 : 40, 41) says that he healed *all* that were sick and many of the demoniacs. **And he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.** Like the demoniac in the synagogue, they would testify that he was the Messiah; but Jesus would not receive such testimony, for he would not have his cause promoted by demons; besides, it was not time for the proclamation of his Messiahship. His "hour" had not yet come, and any premature announcement of his divine nature

would precipitate the tragic crisis of his life. He had first to lay the foundations of his kingdom by winning a body of disciples, teaching them, and thus establishing his church.

THE SYMPATHY OF JESUS. Christ's great heart of love cannot endure the thought of the wretchedness of mankind. "Our Lord is the health-center for the race." — *John H. Jowett.*

"Many years ago there was a picture on exhibition in the Liverpool art gallery which I have never forgotten. It was the picture of Christ, but such a Christ! No effeminate pietist with his head on one side, but a great, splendid, broad-shouldered hero. Some children were clustered around his knees, but one was in his arms. He was tossing her up above his head, and she was laughing into his eyes that smiled again. The disciples stood about, looking properly scandalized, to be sure; though the women looked and laughed, as women should. I exclaimed in admiration and delight." — *Rev. Charles F.*



Christ Blessing Little Children. Hofmann.

Aked, D.D. Christ's love for children was one phase of his universal sympathy.

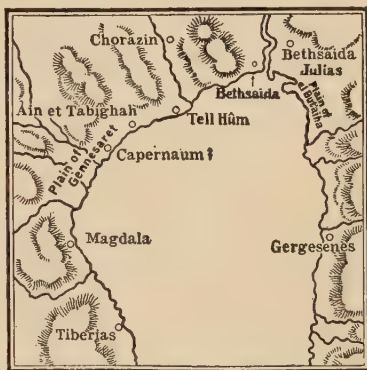
"The most hopeless symptom of certain maladies — generally they are those induced by dissipation — is a sense of utter degradation. The most dissolute and disgraced found in Christ not only pity, but a delicate considerateness which rekindled their self-respect. Christ began the cure of the demoniac of Gadara by treating him with the respect one gentleman shows toward another; treating him as the poor creature had not been treated since his malady began. He inquired, 'What is thy name?' It was equivalent to exchanging cards in modern high society." — *William Burnet Wright.*

"The Saviour met the crowds of sufferers with sympathy. As his gaze fell on them he was, I believe, the greatest sufferer among them. He was then, as truly as when on the cross, the Man of Sorrows." — *G. H. C. MacGregor.*

III. THE HEALING OF LEPROSY, vs. 35-45. INTO THE NEXT TOWNS. Our Lord probably spent the night in Peter's house, and may have made it his permanent headquarters. Peter heard him rising the next morning "a great while before day," seeking a solitary spot outside the town, where he spent some time in prayer. Even his majestic powers needed reinforcement from above, for he was weighed down by the limitations of our human nature. Throughout his life he found in communion with his Father the peace and strength required for his work; and where he found them his disciples also may obtain them. "Christlike praying in secret will be the secret of Christlike living in public." — *Andrew Murray*.

But Christ was not permitted long to enjoy this solitude and heavenly intercourse. He was soon hunted out by Peter, with Andrew and James and John. They came

to tell him that he was the most sought person in Capernaum, that a crowd had already collected seeking new miracles, some of them with their sick friends and relatives, others gathered merely out of curiosity. They expected Jesus to return to town and continue his gracious and wonderful ministry of the day before, but not so; the Lord proposed that they go at once "into the next towns." The cities of Dalmanutha, Magdala, Bethsaida, and Chorazin were all near by, and Galilee was closely dotted with towns and villages, possessing a crowded population in Christ's day, though it is far from crowded now after centuries of the Turk. "I must preach there also," said Jesus, "for to this end came I forth" — to preach the love of God and bid men yield their lives to that love, not to work miracles, except as these would serve to authenticate the message and himself as the divine Messenger. Therefore he and his disciples set forth on a home-



mission evangelistic tour, repeating the Capernaum programme of synagogue preaching and the casting out of demons. And ever since, through all the Christian ages, the aim of Christianity has been outreaching, constant progress in missionary expansion, "into the next towns."

"IF THOU WILT," "I WILL." In the course of this tour among the cities a leper came to Jesus, falling on his face (Luke 5: 12), worshipping him (Matt. 8: 2), and begging pitifully that the Saviour would cure him. This man, as Luke, the physician, says, was "full of leprosy," it was an advanced case, the disease covering the entire body with ghastly, swelling sores, and rotting away the members one by one. No more terrible disease can afflict mankind, and even to-day medical science is only beginning to effect cures. The Jews isolated lepers strictly. They must cover their mouths, go bare-headed and with rent garments, keep at a distance from others, and warn others off by crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" But the cry of this leper was something different: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." How many have since gone to Jesus with the same plea, asserting his power to grant their request, and questioning his willingness! The truth, however, is the reverse of this: the Lord is always eager to bless, but he cannot always grant our petitions, sometimes because we lack the necessary faith, and sometimes because to do for us what we ask would work us harm.

Mark alone, with one of his vivid bits of description, tells how the Saviour was "moved with compassion," and, tossing to the wind the rules which forbade touching a leper on pain of ceremonial defilement, laid his hand on the festering body, and thus aided the poor man's faltering faith. "*I will; be thou made clean,*" the Healer declared, and instantly the wondrous transformation was wrought, firm and healthy flesh taking the place of the gaping sores, strength coming in like a flood upon the tottering body, and over it all the blessed assurance of restored purity. Christ bade the man go to the priest and obtain official acknowledgment and record of the cure, so that he might thereafter mingle freely with men. Moreover, with a sternness which is inadequately shown in our translation, the Lord bade the man keep quiet about the miracle, lest it bring his benefactor into undue notice; for Christ did not wish his mission to emphasize healing but teaching, nor would he hasten the fatal conflict with the Jewish authorities which he foresaw. But the restored leper could not

refrain from telling every one he met what a wonderful and blessed thing had happened to him, so that Christ was obliged to avoid overwhelming crowds by doing as John the Baptist had done, passing by the towns and preaching in the uninhabited regions. Even then they came to him from all quarters, but they could not bring the sick with them in great numbers, and by compelling his hearers to travel some distance our Lord assured himself of audiences thoroughly in earnest. There is such a thing as having churches too convenient!



A Group of Lepers by the Wayside.

not a popular one or an easy one. He must press on and still on, reaching ever more souls with his message. Following his example, let us not seek the "soft job," but "let us go into 'the next towns.'" God help us to carry Jesus to the next man, the next house, the next store, the next street, until all are saved!" — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D. D.*

"To-day, as in Capernaum, all, everywhere, are seeking Jesus; not in every instance seeking him intelligently or consciously, but seeking him, at least instinctively and very really, in that they have wants which he alone can satisfy." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*. Dr. Trumbull tells how on Broadway he once found a crowd gathered around a lost child; and how the little fellow, as Dr. Trumbull looked down on him in tender sympathy, reached out his tiny hand and said in a gentle, plaintive voice, "Please, won't you show me my way home?" That is what all the lost sons of God want above everything else, to be shown the way back to their Father's house.

LESSON III. — January 15.

JESUS AND SINNERS. — Mark 2: 1-17.

PRINT vs. 3-12, 15-17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.* — MARK 2: 17.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 32 : 1, 2, 5-7, 10, 11.

Primary Topic : JESUS FORGIVES A SINNER.

Lesson Material : Mark 2 : 3-12.

Memory Verse : Son, thy sins are forgiven. Mark 2 : 5.

Junior Topic : JESUS HEALS AND FORGIVES.

Lesson Material : Mark 2 : 3-12.

Memory Verse : Mark 2 : 5.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS' POWER OVER SIN.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will enjoy making little pasteboard models of an Eastern home, showing the windowless walls, the one narrow door, and the open court within, the rooms of the house opening from it. Show the outer stairs, the guest chamber on the flat roof, and a roof projecting over the court. Little blocks of wood vari-

ously colored may be used to represent the various prominent actors in the scene and the other persons making up the crowd, and the entire story may be acted out by means of these rough figures.

The Older Classes will review the circumstances of the lesson and will emphasize its great teachings on the value of faith, the mission of Christ, and the forgiveness of sins. Each of these topics

may be made the subject of a five-minute talk by some member of the class previously appointed, and each talk may be followed by a discussion.

Question Suggested for Discussion:
What methods should be adopted to bring our community to Christ?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Jesus the Friend of Sinners.

I. SEEKING THE SAVIOUR, vs. 1-4.

Crowds following Jesus.
Borne of four.
Down through the roof.
Bringing our friends to Jesus.

II. FAITH IN THE SAVIOUR, vs. 5-12.

"Thy sins are forgiven."
"Arise and walk."
"They were all amazed."
The glorious results of faith.

III. THE SAVIOUR OF SINNERS, vs. 13-17.

Publicans and sinners.
Fault-finding Pharisees.
The physician and the sick.
Christ's remedy for sin.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The healing of the palsied man, May or June, A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry. The call of Matthew, soon afterward. His great feast, in the autumn of the same year.

Place. — Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Crowds following Christ, and why.
The scribes in history and in the New Testament.
Publicans in the New Testament.
New Testament illustrations of faith.
New Testament examples of work for others.
Christ as the Great Physician.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Miller's *Devotional Hours with the Bible*. Bennett's *The Life of Christ according to St. Mark*. Robinson's *Studies in Mark's Gospel*. Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. Morison's *Practical Commentary on St. Mark*. Chadwick's *Humanity and God*. Moody's *To the Work!* Watkinson's *The Duty of Imperial Thinking*. Pentecost's *Grace Abounding in the Forgiveness of Sins*. Williams's *Rational Godliness*. Robertson's *Sermons, Fifth Series*. Bacon's *The Simplicity That Is in Christ*. Whiton's *New Points to Old Texts*. Kingsley's *The Good News of God*.

3. And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four.

I. **SEEKING THE SAVIOUR, vs. 1-4.** **THE CROWDS FOLLOWING JESUS.** Our Lord with his disciples had been making a circuit of the many towns of Galilee, preaching and healing. Of late his popularity and the incessant demands made upon him for cures of the sick had compelled him to teach in the uninhabited places, though still the crowds flocked about him. After weeks of this toilsome evangelism Jesus and his little band felt the imperative need of rest, and returned to their headquarters in the fishing town of Capernaum, on the northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee, probably staying in Peter's house where they would be very grateful to him for the cure of Peter's mother-in-law. But, though they entered the place, very likely, at night to escape observation, and kept themselves very quiet, the wonderful Teacher and Miracle-worker could not remain hidden. Once more, from all parts of the city, the poor sufferers hobbled and crawled to his abode, or were carried thither by their pitying friends. They filled the courtyard and crammed the narrow vestibule, and thronged the street outside the door, fairly besieging the house. Some of them, we may be sure, came eager to hear the marvellous truths of the Teacher, and to these our Lord addressed himself. No report is given us of his sermon. How glad we should be to know what he said when he returned from his first home-missionary tour! But Mark does not tell us. Peter, his informant, doubtless heard the address, though he may have been so busy superintending the crowds that pressed into his house that he did not give much heed to the Master's discourse. At any rate, what (as was natural) most impressed itself upon his mind was the breaking of a hole in the porch-roof of his house!

3. And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy. "Palsy is a general term for paralysis, the loss of muscular power resulting from injury or disease of the brain or nervous system." — *Prof. Melancthon W. Jacobus*. He was helpless, in a pitiable state, and of course unable to earn a livelihood. **Borne of four.** One man was at each corner of the mattress on which the sufferer lay. A burden under which two men would stagger could be carried easily by four. Co-operation is the secret of ready accomplishment. It is the great word of to-day in all commercial, mechanical, financial, and social operations, and has made possible the enormous material progress of the world in recent decades. Christians are only beginning to utilize the principle in church work, but already it has brought about many triumphs,

4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.

as in the splendid missionary successes of the last half century. When Christians of an entire city co-operate in a grand evangelistic campaign, a Pentecost is quite certain to be the reward.

4. **And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd.** Crowds are likely to keep men from the Saviour, — crowds of trifling duties, crowds of selfish interests, crowds of amusements, crowds of doubts, crowds of fears, crowds of worldly friends, many other thronging hindrances. An earnest soul, realizing the eternal issues



Outside Stairs Leading to Roof and Upper Room.

at stake, will make his way to Christ through any crowd; and his friends, if they are earnest, will make a way for him. **They uncovered the roof where he was.** The roof of a house in Palestine would be flat, and was much used as a place of resort in the cool of the day or even at noon: compare 2 Sam. 11: 2; Acts 10: 9. The guest chamber was often placed upon the roof, and the guests were often entertained there; compare 1 Sam. 9: 26. The roof was reached by an outer stairway, usually of stone. **And when they had broken it up.** "Some think there was an awning over the open court, which had only to be lifted; others that there was a gallery or veranda running along the second story, a part of which was removed. But the phrase translated 'broken it up' is a strong one meaning 'dug it out,' which suggests something different, and in all probability the house was one of the modest, single-storied cottages suitable for humble folk. The roof of a Jewish house of this kind might consist of beams covered with poles and brushwood and overlaid with earth and gravel. It might be possible, therefore, to break it up, and let the man down the noisy process interrupted Christ's discourse, we may be sure that the disciples looked up with expressions of annoyance. When it became clear what was going on, Peter, the owner of the house, probably shouted an angry prohibition. As the bits of caked mud and of tile or sticks fell down on the heads of those below, we may imagine John leaping to shield his beloved Master from them. There was doubtless much confusion for a minute. **They let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.** The opening would let in the glare of the light from the bright Eastern sky, but it was soon filled up by the bulging mattress. Holding by each corner, the four friends above lowered their burden as far as they could, calling on the men below to take it the rest of the way. As the pale face and shrunken form of the sick man came to view, and the meaning of the proceeding became evident, a hush fell on the little assembly. Silently the mattress with its occupant was laid at Christ's feet, a mute petition, while the crowd looked on, expectant.

BRINGING OUR FRIENDS TO JESUS. "These four men teach us a lesson. We ought to help one another. If there is a lame boy in the school, the other boys should lend him their legs. If one girl is not able to go out, the other girls should try to brighten her loneliness. Christians who have been healed by Christ should try to carry to him their unsaved friends." — J. R. Miller.

"Co-operation goes far in the salvation of men. Parent, teacher, preacher, and friend must unite if salvation is to come to the house. Iron chests holding great treasures are sometimes secured by three or four locks, and it is only by the con-

currence of those holding the several keys that the chest can be opened. Thus again and again the treasures of grace are reached only as two or three agree in prayer and effort. When Epworth parsonage was burned, the child John Wesley was saved through an upper window by neighbors who stood on each other's shoulders. Thus the soul itself is often a brand plucked from the burning by the combined sympathies, supplications, and sacrifices of those who have caught the spirit of the Master." — *William L. Watkinson.*



"They Uncovered the Roof."

Those four men were determined. They allowed no barrier to defeat their purpose. It was not easy to carry that weight on the clumsy mattress. It was difficult to pull it up the steep and narrow stairs. It was hard to break up the roof under that hot sun. But their friend's cure was at stake, and they were undaunted. Should we be less determined when the eternal welfare of a soul is at stake?

"Those four men were real workers. It may be one of them had been blind and the Lord had given him his sight. The other may have been lame from his birth; when the Master restored him to strength, he thought he would like to use it in bringing some one else to be healed. The third man may have been a cured leper, and he wished to help in getting some other afflicted one cured. Perhaps this palsied man was his next-door neighbor. The fourth man, it may be, had been deaf and dumb, and he thought he would employ his hearing and his speech in helping some one else. The palsied man may have said he had no faith in Christ; but these four friends told him how they had been cured, and if the Master could heal them surely he could heal a palsied man. Nothing will wake up a man quicker than to have four persons after him in one day." — *D. L. Moody.*

"I once asked a man who had been a notorious sinner what led him first to believe it possible for him to be a good man. 'Well,' said he, 'Sister believed it, and told me God could do it, so I came to believe it too.'" — *Rev. Samuel Chadwick.*

If faith and determination on the part of the bearers were required, what about the man who was borne? It was a fearful ordeal for him, especially as his racked body was jolted up the outside stairs, and lay in the sun on the hot roof, and was thrust through the narrow opening. Some forms of palsy were accompanied by cramps and were shockingly painful. But with the prospect of health before him, the sick man could endure anything; and a sinner who longs for release from his sins will stick at nothing if he can only get to the Redeemer.

"The bearers are unsteady. Racked and worn
With long disease, and clumsily upborne,
What is my anguish with their stumbling feet
And all the push and clamor of the street?
But any way, however rough it be,
O good Physician, if I get to thee!

"The crowd is great about thee. How they press,
Each in his own absorbing wretchedness,
Unheeding me, the sick man borne of four,
Halting despondent at the crowded door.
But any way, however thronged it be,
O good Physician, if I get to thee!

"The outer stairway is a hill of pain,
Torture of wasted form and beating brain,
Narrow and difficult and high and slow,
A demon's ladder to a mount of woe.
But any way, however steep it be,
O good Physician, if I get to thee!

"Upon the roof a glaring light is spread,
Blistering underneath and overhead.
They tear the tiles; the smarting dust is thick —
O men, ye four, be mercifully quick!
But any way, however hard it be,
O good Physician, if I get to thee!"
— *Amos R. Wells in The Christian Advocate.*

5. And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.

6. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7. Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, *even God*?

8. And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

II. FAITH IN THE SAVIOUR, vs. 5-12. 5. And Jesus seeing their faith.

The faith of the bearers, who had taken so much pains and shown so much boldness in their loving efforts for their friend; and the faith of the sick man himself, who may have originated the plan and urged the bearers on. Nothing seems to have pleased the Saviour more than an exhibition of faith; he reserved for that his most enthusiastic praise, and he is just as much pleased with faith to-day as then. Whatever faith in him and in his promises we manifest, for ourselves and for others, we may be sure gives Christ the greatest joy and wins from him the most glorious rewards. **Saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son.** Luke 5 : 20 has Christ address him as "Man," but Luke was not a witness of the scene, while Peter was. The tenderer word, a word of encouragement and personal interest, was probably the one used, even as our Lord spoke to the sick woman who touched him in the crowd as "Daughter" (Matt. 9 : 22). **Thy sins are forgiven.** "Christ's inspired insight had discerned that the paralytic craved healing for his soul as well as for his body." — *Prof. W. H. Bennett*. Perhaps his sickness had been caused by his sins. Thus the sins of the sick man at the pool of Bethesda are not mentioned, but after Christ had healed him he bade him "Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee" (John 5 : 14).

6. **But there were certain of the scribes sitting there.** The scribes were the class of official interpreters of the law of Moses and the numerous rules that had grown up around them. "During our Lord's absence from Capernaum it would seem there had arrived not only from Galilee, but even from Judæa and from Jerusalem (Luke 5 : 17), Pharisees and lawyers, who were insidiously watching all that he did. Emissaries from the hostile party at Jerusalem, where the Lord's death had already been decreed (John 5 : 18), they proceeded to carry out a settled plan of collecting charges against him and thwarting his work of mercy." — *Cambridge Bible*. **And reasoning in their hearts.** They were skilful and experienced debaters, and knew too much to blurt out their thoughts until they had turned them over in their minds. They sat in silence, glowering at Christ suspiciously.

7. **Why doth this man thus speak?** The scribes, in asking this question, were not moved by the true spirit of inquiry, for they had settled the question in their minds, as the next words show. The "why" of Christ's words is always a fruitful topic for discussion if the inquiry is a genuine one. **He blasphemeth.** Blasphemy is any speech which is contrary to the honor of God, and this offence was punishable among the Jews with death. Jesus had not said that he could forgive sins, but he had implied as much in declaring authoritatively that the palsied man's sins were forgiven; and to make this claim was to assume a divine prerogative. **Who can forgive sins but one, even God?** "Men may forgive trespasses that have been committed against themselves in so far as they are injuries done to themselves. But these trespasses, besides being injuries to men, are sins against God. So far indeed as they are sins at all, they are relative only to God (Ps. 51 : 4). None but he, therefore, can forgive them. In this fundamental idea the censorious scribes were right; but then in all other respects they were wrong." — *James Morison*. If they had viewed Christ's character, his words, and his works with an unprejudiced eye, they would have concluded that God, who had given him divine power, had with it given him divine authority over sin.

8. **And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves.** He did not need to overhear their mutterings or look at their sneering faces, for he could read men's hearts like open books. "There cannot possibly be any reasoning in one's heart which our omniscient Judge is not able instantly to perceive and to answer. Once a French soldier fell asleep on his post, and was brought up for trial by court-martial. The first witness called was the Emperor Napoleon. 'I

9. Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy),

11. I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.

12. And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

was visiting the sentinels' outposts,' he said; 'I saw this soldier myself.' " — *Charles S. Robinson*. **Saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?** Christ answers the "why" of the scribes with a "why" of his own, one that always calls for an answer on men's part. What motive lies back of our thoughts? That motive determines their character. The thoughts may be logically correct, but if hatred, selfishness, ambition, or any other evil motive animates them, all their logic is vitiated. No true reasoning can flow out of an evil heart.

9. Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk? Christ is not speaking of the *acts*, since of course the healing of a sick soul is more difficult than the healing of a sick body; the first has to do with eternal and the second with temporal interests. But Christ is asking which *claim* could more easily be made, made with the least chance of being discovered false if no power lay behind it; and of course the first claim was far easier to make, since no one could prove whether it was substantiated or not. Therefore Christ, having made the first claim, goes on to make the second and more difficult claim, to prove the first.

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy). Fourteen times in this one Gospel of Mark our Lord applies to himself the title, "Son of man." Though he declared with all earnestness that he was the Son of God, the earthly incarnation of Deity, his favorite name for himself was Son of man, though the name is never in the Gospels applied to him by others. This title, which takes its origin from the Messianic passage, Dan. 7:13, would be understood by any Jewish hearer as tantamount to a declaration of his Messiahship. At the same time it signified that Jesus was typical man, the Second Adam, who was to be tempted in all points as men are tempted, and to die on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of humanity. Christ now proposes to prove that he has on earth the same authority to forgive sins which his Father possesses in heaven.

11. I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. The "bed" which the sick man was to take up was the common mattress-like pallet on which the people were wont to throw themselves down for a mid-day sleep. It could easily be rolled up and carried under the arm. He was to go home, giving joy to his dear ones there, and resuming the long-interrupted tasks of daily life.

12. And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all. The cure, as in the case of most of Christ's miracles, was immediate and complete. It made an unanswerable reply to the scribes' criticisms. If God had given Christ the power to work such a divine miracle, Christ was to be believed when he claimed for himself that other attribute of God, the power to forgive sins. **Insomuch that they were all amazed.** Scribes and all, though the scribes would not join the others in glorifying God, for they



From a photograph by Forder.
Carrying Beds on the Head.

15. And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

would not attribute the cure to God but to some trickery or black art, or Christ's connivance with Satan. And glorified God. The healed man himself took the lead in this praise of God, as we are told in Luke 5:25. This glorifying of God rather than of Christ was precisely as Christ would have it; see John 14:10. **Saying, We never saw it on this fashion.** Literally, "So we never saw!"

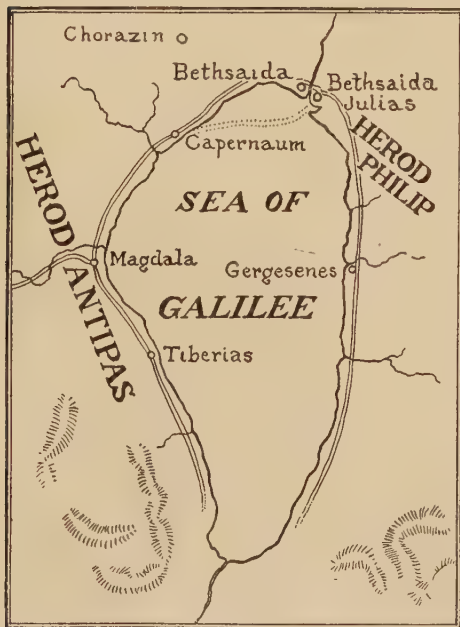
THE GLORIOUS RESULTS OF FAITH. "It was this 'substance of things hoped for' that gave America to Columbus, when billows, miles deep, rose between him and the land; and the men he commanded well nigh rose in rebellion against the obstinacy which believed in 'things not yet seen.'" — *Frederick W. Robertson.*

"There was in Christ a life of peculiar intensity and extraordinary range, in virtue of which what was supernatural to others was simply natural to him." — *James M. Whiton.* Christ prophesied that his disciples should do greater things than he had done, through their faith in him.

"At the Southport Convention of 1896 the leaders met under the shadow of a great sorrow. Its president had been ill for most of the year, and had come to the convention in great bodily weakness. He had completely lost his voice, and had not spoken in anything more than a whisper for months. Doctors with one consent declared he could never preach again. At one of the daily meetings of the speakers for prayer, without any arrangement or request, the prayers centered in the president. With one consent prayer was made that he might be restored, and that his voice might return. Within twenty-four hours he addressed an assembly of nearly two thousand people, and has continued to preach unto this day." — *Rev. Samuel Chadwick.*

III. THE SAVIOUR OF SINNERS, vs. 13-17. Verses 13 and 14 are included in this lesson. They relate the call of Matthew, and as that call is assigned for study in the lesson for March 4, "Jesus and the Twelve," we postpone these two verses for study at that time and pass on to the next event related by Mark.

15. And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house. Not at Christ's house, but at the house of Matthew (Levi) the publican, who had just become a follower of Christ, and who (Luke 5:29) celebrated the event by giving "a great feast" to say farewell to his old life, and doubtless to urge his publican friends to follow his example. And many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples. The publicans were ranked by the Jews with the vilest sinners. They were the subordinate tax-collectors of the province, required to pay over to the Romans (or, in the case of Galilee, to Herod



Antipas) certain large sums every year, and allowed to collect for themselves as much more as they could wring from the people by all manner of browbeating, blackmail, and cruel threats. They oppressed poor and rich alike, and were heartily hated by all. A Jew who would take such an office under the Romans and so persecute his countrymen was the most despised of mortals. No Jewish religious leader before Jesus had deigned to notice the publicans. **For there were many, and they followed**

16. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, *How is it* that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17. And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

him. Capernaum was on the frontier between the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas and that of Herod Philip, and was moreover on the main caravan route between Syria and Egypt. There were therefore many publicans in Capernaum and the neighboring towns, collecting the customs as well as the internal revenues.

16. **And the scribes of the Pharisees.** Some scribes belonged to the Sadducees, the freer sect, but these scribes were of the strict sect of the Pharisees, intensely bigoted but at the same time intensely patriotic, and therefore hating the publican most bitterly. **When they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans.** The act of eating with a man established, in the eyes of the Jews, a close relation of friendship with him. Christ seemed to be definitely taking his stand with the enemies of the people. **Said unto his disciples, *How is it* that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?** The Greek is very elliptical as the italics show; it is like our current slang, "How's to take a ride?" The scribes did not dare speak to Christ himself, who had so recently met the criticisms with a glorious display of power, and so they went to the disciples with their implied charge.

17. **And when Jesus heard it.** Doubtless the disciples told him; perhaps some of them were disturbed by the same matter. **He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.** Christ implies that the scribes and Pharisees are "whole" in order to go as far as possible with his critics; in reality, by their harsh suspicions and unkind criticisms they were proving themselves to be sinners of the deepest dye, "sick," like the worst of the publicans. But they regarded themselves as perfectly sound, and in no need of a physician. **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.** "All have sinned," wrote Paul, and Christ came to call all men to repentance and summon the whole world to the Father. Let no one say that he is too wicked to join the church. It is Christ's church, and Christ established it for the wicked. Those who in their self-righteousness deem that they have no need of a Saviour need him most of all. Those who like the publican in the temple beat their breasts and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," are not far from the kingdom of God.

CHRIST'S REMEDY FOR SIN. Christ's cure for sin, in one word, was and is *love*. "A city missionary in London saw seated on a saloon doorstep three young women, and his heart was moved with pity for them. He went and spoke to them, and they met him with impudent and shameless derision. But, undismayed, he said to them, 'I have four daughters of my own, you see; and perhaps some day some missionary may want to speak to them.' And they said, 'Then are they bad girls like us?' And he answered, 'Oh, they are by no means perfect.' And he turned to them and asked them if they were not weary of the ways of sin. That evening they were all penitent, weeping for their dismal past, and to-day they are rescued and saved. That man 'receiveth sinners.'" — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

"The sun that melts the smallest splinter from an iceberg can also melt the whole mountain of ice when it is brought under its power. If we would only remember this, it would save us from the deadly error of supposing that any sin, however small, is a matter of indifference to God; or that any sin, however great and grievous in our eyes, is beyond the power of his grace to forgive." — *George F. Pentecost.*

"Take a serious hour alone, and with prayer, to discover what is your besetting sin. That is the palsy of your soul. Then determine, with steadfast will, to shake it from you, and hear the Son of God still saying, as of old, 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk.'" — *Rowland Williams.*

LESSON IV. — January 22.

JESUS AND THE LAW. — Mark 2:18—3:6.

PRINT Mark 2:18-22; 3:1-6.

(May be used with temperance applications.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.* — MATT. 5:17.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 119 : 33-40.

Primary Topic : DOING GOOD ON THE LORD'S DAY.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 1-5.

Memory Verse : It is lawful to do good on the sabbath day. Matt. 12 : 12.

Junior Topic : HOW TO USE THE LORD'S DAY.

Lesson Material : Mark 2 : 23-3 : 5.

Memory Verse : The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath. Mark 2 : 28.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW JESUS OBEYED THE LAW.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS DECLARES THE HIGHER LAW.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes need to be taught the right way to keep the Sabbath, that it is not to be a day for frivolity, nor is it a day for gloom. Show the boys and girls that Sunday is above all days a time for joy and progress and helpfulness, for honoring God and blessing other people. The lesson of obedience to law is one that should also be enforced with young people, especially in these days of prevalent lawlessness.

The Older Classes have in this lesson three instances of conflict with the lower law and obedience to the higher law. So teach the lesson as to bring out clearly the foundation of all law, and the difference between the regulations of fashion, bigotry, prejudice, ignorance, and selfishness, over against Christ's law of love to God and man. Apply the principle to prohibition, Sabbath keeping, fasting, tithing, church-going, and many other practical matters.

Suggested Question for Discussion : Why and how may Christians bring about the strict observance of the Eighteenth Amendment ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The walk through the grain field and the healing of the man with the withered hand, in May or June, A.D. 28, the second year of Christ's ministry. Matthew's feast, probably in the autumn of the same year, after the Sermon on the Mount.

Place. — Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Palestine parties in Christ's day.
The value of fasting.
Christianity and progress.
Christ's miracles worked on the Sabbath.
Christ's teachings in regard to the Sabbath.
How Christ met opposition.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : How Jesus Obeyed the Law.

I. NEW CLOTH IN OLD GARMENTS,
Mark 2:18-22.

A question of fasting.
New wine in fresh wine-skins.
The old and the new.

II. JESUS IN THE GRAIN FIELD, Mark
2 : 23-28.

Pharisaic Sabbath rules.
The Sabbath for man.
How to keep the Lord's day.

III. THE MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND,
Mark 3 : 1-6.

A miracle born of sympathy.
The Pharisees and Herodians conspire.
Christian obedience to law.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Jones's *The Gospel according to Mark, I-VI*.
6. Walpole's *Mark*. Milner's *Mark*. Bushnell's *Christ and His Salvation*. Trench's *Studies in the Gospels*. Sydney Smith's *Sermons*. Chalmers's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. Burrell's *The Gospel of Gladness*. Dewey's *Discourses on Various Subjects*. Jones's *The Unyielded Word*. Webb's *Sermons*. Banks's *Bible Soul-Winners*. Charles Loring Brace's *Short Sermons to News Boys*. Hertford's *Anchor of the Soul*. Dewhurst's *The Investment of Truth*. Jefferson's *The Character of Jesus*. Clausen's "Preach It Again." Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. MacLaren's *Expositions*. Rowland in *Jesus in the Cornfield*. Hubbard's *The Teachings of Jesus in Parables*.

I. NEW CLOTH IN OLD GARMENTS, Mark 2 : 18-22. 18. And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. "At that very time. If Levi's feast was

MARK 2:18. And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: and they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19. And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day.

21. No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse rent is made.

on a Sunday or Wednesday evening, it would break into one of their fasts: for though the law required fasting only on the Day of Atonement, the strict Pharisees fasted on the Monday and Thursday of every week; see Luke 18:12." — *Rev. A. S. Walpole*. "John" refers to John the Baptist. **And they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?** John the Baptist was at this time confined to his lonely prison in Machærus, where he had been thrown because he dared to rebuke Herod Antipas for his unholy relations with his brother's wife. John's disciples were grieving for him, and were in no mood for feasting but for fasting. John, besides, was a Nazarite, an ascetic, and his followers would sympathize with many of the views of the strict Pharisees, who looked askance at Christ's more liberal practices. This question implied a rebuke, though on the surface it merely asked for information.

19. **And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?** "At a Jewish wedding it was the custom for the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, to go to fetch the bride. These friends were called 'the sons of the bride-chamber.' In this passage the bridegroom is Christ, and the 'sons of the bride-chamber' are his disciples." — *Rev. G. E. J. Milner*. **As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.** John the Baptist himself had compared Christ to a bridegroom (John 3:29), and had spoken of his rejoicing at the coming of the Messiah as the bridegroom's friend shares his joy. John's disciples should have remembered this saying.

20. **But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them.** The Greek word translated "taken away" implies violence, and hints at a terrible conclusion of Christ's life. Very early in his ministry (see John 2:19; 3:14) our Lord had foreseen the tragic close of his life on earth, and here again he foretells it. All his life, feasting and all, was darkened by the shadow of the cross. In the manifest hostility of the Pharisees, allied for the time even with the disciples of his own herald, Christ saw Calvary very clearly, as if it were close at hand. **And then will they fast in that day.** Christ does not condemn fasting. He sees in it the inevitable and natural expression of sorrow, and an aid to the conquest of temptation and the purification of the soul. He knew his disciples would have ample time and occasion for it, and he would strengthen them for their trials by filling their lives full of joy while joy unmarred by grief and persecution was possible for them.

21. **No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment.** "Undressed cloth" is "unbleached cloth, which in its shrinking tears away from that to which it has been sewed." — *Bible for Home and Schools*. **Else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old.** Christ implied that it would be foolish to try to impose the old Jewish religious customs and rules upon the new religion which he was teaching to his disciples. The Pharisaic system was a code of repressions, of restrictions; Christ's system was the rule of freedom. The two religions would not mingle. **And a worse rent is made.** Christianity has a place for fasting, but not as a formal and regular requirement. Christians fast when the needs of their life call for it, and only then. To impose upon them a definite amount of fasting, at definite seasons and for definite lengths of time, would destroy both Christianity and fasting.

22. **And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins.** The receptacles for wine were not bottles in Christ's day, but the skins of animals, usually goats with the rough side inward. "Such bottles, being more portable and less breakable than earth-

22. And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but *they put* new wine into fresh wine-skins.

enware, were peculiarly well suited to the use of primitive and nomad peoples, as they are to the roving Bedouin of to-day." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*.



Photograph by Bonfils.

Man with Skin Water Bottle.

Else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins. The wine-skins are stretched by the fermentation of the wine, and as they grow old become dry, brittle, and liable to crack, when they are clumsily mended by gathering up the cracked place, or putting in a new piece of leather or even a flat piece of wood. If new (unfermented) wine is put into such a wine-skin the gases are sure to split it, and both wine-skin and wine are gone. But *they put* new wine into fresh wine-skins. "They put" is not in the original and the sentence has the force of an exclamatory summing up: "But — new wine for new wine-skins!"

THE OLD AND THE NEW. "The Christian life is not a little of the new on the surface while a great deal of the old remains underneath, as wretched and imperfect as ever. It is a new life, wholly distinct from the old." — *Rev. George Henry Hubbard*. Mr. Hubbard illustrates the point with the story of a man who said that he always repented of any sin he committed and prayed for forgiveness. "Why, I never beat my horse but I am sorry for it afterwards." Said his pastor: "If your sorrow doesn't make you quit beating your horse, it will not save you from perdition."

"Mother," said a youth on his return from a revival meeting, "I have been converted, and I have burned my betting books" — there you have the new wine finding the new wine-skin. Commissioner Tucker of the Salvation Army was once a highly placed civil servant in India. But the love of Christ got possession of his heart, and at once he was filled with a desire to preach to India's millions. He

surrendered position and the prospect of rank and fame, and gave up his life to save the lost of India — the new wine sought and found the new wine-skin." — *Rev. J. D. Jones*.

A Russian princess saw a rose bush in the palace grounds growing so near the driveway that its branches were grazed and broken, so she had a sentinel placed there to protect it. Many years afterward, when the princess and all the people of her time were dead, and the rose-bush had long ago perished, a sentinel was still stationed at the same unusual spot, and no one knew why. It was like many old customs and beliefs, merely memorial of something that once was beautiful and true but that had become meaningless and empty. — *Condensed from Frederic E. Dewhurst*.

"In the words, 'new bottles,' we have a hint at the mystery of regeneration; and this language He only had a right to use who had power to say also, 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev. 21:5)." — *Archbishop Trench*.

II. JESUS IN THE GRAIN FIELD, Mark 2:23-28. PHARISAIC SABBATH RULES. On a certain Sabbath our Lord and the disciples were passing through a field of wheat, using one of the paths commonly used by the public. The disciples were hungry (Matt. 12:1), and began to pluck the wheat, rub out the grains in their hands, and eat them. Some Pharisees, always watching Jesus to find some fault of which to accuse him, here saw their chance. They could not charge the disciples with theft, for the law permitted them to do what they were doing (Deut. 23:25); but the law forbade reaping, and the Rabbis in their refinement upon the law had declared that picking grain with the hand was a kind of reaping; the law also forbade threshing, and the Rabbis had decided that rubbing out the kernels in the hand

was a kind of threshing ! After the same fashion they forbade walking on the grass on the Sabbath, for thus the feet threshed out the grain ! A fruit might not be picked from a tree on the sacred day, for that was reaping. Such absurd rules are sure to be made whenever man seeks to enlarge upon and improve the laws of God, whenever the spirit of the law is allowed to escape while men insist upon the letter of it.

THE SABBATH FOR MAN. "Did ye never read ?" was a favorite question with the Rabbis, and Christ adopted it in ironical rebuke of the Pharisees. They should have known all about the great national hero, David, but they seem to have forgotten how, when he was fleeing from Saul, he and his followers came to the tabernacle, which



Jesus and His Disciples Going Through the Cornfield.

Whele.

was then at Nob, and, made desperate by hunger, ventured to feast upon the twelve loaves of bread which had been laid out before Jehovah in the Holy Place — bread which only the priests might lawfully eat (1 Sam. 21:1-9). If such a breach of law was pardoned because of David's necessity, who should forbid the hungry disciples to satisfy their bodily needs in the simple and harmless way they had taken ? Then Christ summed up the entire matter of Sabbath-observance in the ever-memorable words : "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath : so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath."

The law of gravity is made for all things and all animals, including man ; but the Sabbath was made for the good of man, for his physical and spiritual well-being ; therefore man may use it in any way that will minister to his welfare. And Christ, who was Representative Man (the Son of man), and who was lord of many things (including gravity), possessed an authority extending "even" to an institution so revered by the Jews as the Sabbath, and his free use of it is an example for all men to follow.

HOW TO KEEP THE LORD'S DAY. "The first rule of the Sabbath is public worship ; the great object of every human being should be his progress in righteousness. It is also an important part of the duties of the Sabbath to converse with serious and impressive books. For the Sabbath is not only a day of rest to the body, but it is a day of refreshment to the mind." — *Sydney Smith*.

"One-seventh of life — ten solid years of the life of any one who lives to the threescore years and ten. What a boon ! What an opportunity ! Can we not make the best of Sunday by considering what are the elements of a true, wholesome, happy life which the six busy days are most apt to leave unsupplied, and then to lay out Sunday to supply these missing elements ? They are (1) simple rest and change, (2) home life and family life, and (3) the opportunity for worship and all religious and higher culture. Harriet Beecher Stowe, in one of her little stories, represents some model family as even getting up a little earlier on Sunday mornings, on the ground that such a day is worth making more of than the common days." — *Brooke Herford*.

"Students involve themselves in heated quibbles as to whether or not they sin when they study on Sunday. Most of them do the studying first and then quibble over whether or not it was a sin. The obvious solution to the problem is the simple statement of the unvarnished truth to the effect that Sunday is the one day of the week on which no one can force you to study." — *Rev. Bernard C. Clausen, D.D.*

MARK 3:1. And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered.

It is stated that one in every ten of our wage-earners is forced to labor on the Sabbath, and in this matter the Government post-office is among the worst offenders. The Sunday newspaper is also a great sinner. Every place of amusement thrown open to the public means a relay of workmen to carry it on. "The Sabbath was made for man," not, surely, that he might abuse it, but that he might apply it to his spiritual and eternal good. — *Condensed from Rev. David J. Burrell, D.D.*

"Here we are, out on the ocean of life, steering we don't know where, and every man and boy of us needs one day in which 'to take his bearings.' Were you ever at sea for days or weeks in cloudy weather, when no stars or sun could be seen, and all passengers began to be anxious lest the captain should have missed his reckoning and they were plunging on to some ridge of breakers instead of steering toward the harbor, and at length a clear day came in which the captain could take his bearings? What a joy that day was to all! So ought Sunday to be to you, boys!" — *Charles Loring Brace, talking to his news boys.*

"The Sabbath, our time and practically our only time to learn what God has wrought for us in Jesus Christ; our time and practically our only time to catch glimpses of the sacrifice and the glory of the Crucified One; the Sabbath, our time and practically our only time to measure the meaning and minister to the interests of an endless life; the Sabbath ignored, despised, trampled under foot, polluted with vulgar shows, ridden down with rubber wheels, broken and beaten out of memory by golf clubs and baseball bats, made a convenience all summer long for the travel of a circus and a menagerie, made a cheap commodity and bartered for half dollars at the gate of godless theaters and concerts; this beneficent, hallowed, inspiring day, which stands central in all God's commands, and central, commemorative and prophetic in all God's scheme of adorable mercy; the day that commemorates the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and so testifies to the truth of all he ever said; the day that illumines our hope of everlasting life; ignore the Sabbath,

waste its opportunities, trample on its privileges, reject its gifts, deny its sacred obligations, despise its promised reward, dispute God's threatenings against its desecration, despise Christ's example of habitual worship in the sanctuary on the Sabbath day, — ah! this is fooling with one's own spiritual life, fooling with piety and patriotism; this is to blind one's spiritual eye; this is to blight one's spiritual aspirations; this is to blast the foundations of the Christian's hope." — *E. B. Webb.*

III. THE MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND, Mark 3:1-6.

1. And he entered again into the synagogue. It was again on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6), and probably on the Sabbath following that just described. We are again at Capernaum, in the synagogue given by the kindly Roman centurion. And there was a man there who had his hand withered. It was the *right* hand, Dr. Luke tells us, the hand most necessary in work. The muscles were dried up, stiff, and useless. We are not told the cause,



Bida.

The Man with the Withered Hand.

but in the Old Testament (1 Kings 13:1-6) we read that King Jeroboam, when in wrath he ordered the arrest of God's prophet, found his arm, lifted in command, instantly withered and stiffened so that he could not let it fall again.

2. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

3. And he saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth.

4. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.

Any one is virtually in the sad plight of this man if he is useless to God, though his hands may be strong and flexible.

"Do you understand that a withered hand
Is a hand that duty shuns?
And a hand of strength is a hand that aids
God's helpless little ones?
So I come to charge you in Jesus' name
To see that your hand is strong.
Does the rich red blood course steadily?
Is it nerved to strike down wrong?
Is it eager to lift the fallen up?
Some loving service do?
If not, my brother, that hand of yours,
Like mine, is withered, too."

No life can wither if it is so closely united to Christ that his life courses through the human life. "Livingstone one night in Africa was surrounded by warlike, savage tribes, and it seemed doubtful that he would be permitted to live through the night. But the good man took out his pocket Testament and read the marching orders of the Christian church and the accompanying promise, 'and lo, I am with you alway,' and he closed the book, saying with a smile: 'It is the word of a gentleman, and is not to be doubted,' and lay down and slept in peace. A life like that will never fade or dry up or wither." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

2. **And they watched him.** "They" means the scribes and Pharisees (Luke 6:7), Christ's bitter foes, enraged still more against him because of his defiance of their Sabbath regulations. **Whether he would heal him on the sabbath day.** They expected him to work a miracle of healing; that had come to be his normal and customary action. Would he do it on the Sabbath? The law allowed Sabbath healing when life was in danger, but life was not imperilled in this case. **That they might accuse him.** They had made up their minds about him, and now were only seeking evidence which they could lay before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, and so bring about Christ's condemnation.

3. **And he said unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth.** First the Pharisees had tested him with the question (Matt. 12:10), "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" probably pointing to the man with the withered hand, thus challenging the Master to cure him if he dared. Christ might have waited till the next day, or he might have taken the man off into some obscure corner and there healed him; but all his miracles were worked for their teaching value, as "signs"; therefore he made this one as conspicuous as possible, and bade the sufferer stand out in front of the whole congregation.

4. **And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm?** Jesus intended to bless the poor man; the Pharisees were seeking to do harm to himself, the Healer. Which was the more lawful attitude and purpose? There could be but one answer. **To save a life, or to kill?** Christ proposed to save a life to usefulness; his opponents had murder in their hearts, and would in time, as Christ well knew, accomplish their deadly purpose. **But they held their peace.** They could not answer him without admitting that he would be in the right if he healed the man, and that they would not do.

5. **And when he had looked round about on them with anger.** "One of the purposes of the New Testament is to give us a new revelation of anger. Take away Jesus' capacity for indignation and you destroy the Jesus of the Gospels. His indignation is the creation of his love. Did you ever see a lover stand calm-eyed and gentle-tempered in the presence of the villain who had dared insult the queen of his heart?" — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.* **Being grieved at the hardening of their heart.** They had no pity for the cripple, and were entirely willing that he should

6. And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Hě-rō'-dī-āns took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

continue through life horribly maimed. Christ began with well-deserved wrath, but his anger was soon lost in his sorrow. **He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand.** Note that our Lord merely bade the man move his arm, and his critics could not bring such a command as that as a charge against him. *That* was not "healing on the Sabbath"! No doctor's work was involved. **And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.** The man had some measure of faith, or he would not have tried to obey Christ. He dared to do, or tried to do, what Christ commanded, and in the attempt found healing. "Whatever we try to do because Jesus bids us, he will give us strength to do, however impossible to our unaided powers it is." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

6. **And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him.** The Herodians were the court party, partisans of the Herods, and therefore were the political enemies of the Pharisees, who were bitterly opposed to the Roman rule. The Herodians also were Sadducees, and so on religious grounds also the Pharisees were opposed to them. But hatred and bigotry bring about strange alliances, and Christ's enemies were ready to join with any that would aid them in their designs against the new miracle-worker and teacher who was winning so great a popular following. **How they might destroy him.** They were "filled with madness" (Luke 6 : 11). Already the world's chief tragedy was under way.

It is the tradition that the man with the withered hand was a stone mason, and thus by his misfortune totally cut off from his work. The following poem represents him as arrived home after the miracle and joyfully talking to the dear ones there.

"Praise God! Praise God! Give me my tools again!
Oh, let me grasp a hammer and a saw!
Bring me a nail, and any piece of wood.
Come, see me shut my hand and open it,
And watch my nimble fingers twirl a ring.
How good are solids! — oak, and stone, and iron,
And rough and smooth, and straight and curved and round!
Here, Hannah: for these long and weary years
My hand has ached to smoothe your shining hair
And touch your dimpled cheek. Come, wife, and see:
I am a man again, a man for work,
A man for earning bread and clothes and home;
A man, and not a useless hold-the-hand;
A man, no more a bandaged cumberer.
Oh, blessed Sabbath of all Sabbath days!

"And did you hear them muttering at him?
And did you see them looking sour at me?
They'll cast me from the synagogue, perchance;
But let them: I've a hand, a hand, a hand!
And ah, dear wife, to think He goes about
So quietly, and does such things as this,
Making poor half-men whole, in hand and foot,
In eye and ear and witless maniac mind,
To get such praise as that! Well, here's a hand,
A strong, true hand that now is wholly His,
To work or fight for Him, or what He will;
For He has been the Hand of God to me."

— *Amos R. Wells in The Sunday School Times.*

CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE TO LAW. "The worst of the Jewish method was that it attached to every ceremonial trifle exactly the same weight as to the most momentous matters of goodness, of faith, and of worship. There is no better way of destroying a truth than to fasten it up with a number of half-truths." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.* Christ summed up the whole Law in love to God and to one's neighbor.

"All ceremonial regulations are merely established to help men to reach the true end of their being, and may be suspended or modified by their necessities." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

Obedience to law is the chief issue of to-day. The World War left behind it as one of its worst results a sad lowering of the moral tone all over the world. This showed itself everywhere in an increase of crimes of violence, of licentiousness, of drunkenness, of drug-taking, of gambling. In the United States, where the most superb moral reform of all history, the outlawing of the liquor traffic, has been inaugurated as the culmination of a century of earnest Christian effort, all the powers of darkness have combined to produce disobedience to the Eighteenth Amendment

of the Constitution, and scorn of all other laws at the same time. Thousands of men hitherto influential and holding places of honor have disclosed the rottenness of their character and have lost the respect of all patriotic and Christian Americans. If conditions are not better by the time this book reaches its readers, this lesson should emphasize above all its teachings the necessity for the observance in good faith of the fundamental law of the land. There can be no doubt on which side of the present question our Lord would stand.

LESSON V. — January 29.

THE GROWING FAME OF JESUS. — MARK 3:7-12; 6:53-56.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The common people heard him gladly.* — MARK 12:37.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 60 : 1-5, 8, 9.

Primary Topic : JESUS FOLLOWED BY CROWDS OF PEOPLE.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 7-12.

Memory Verse : He hath done all things well. MARK 7 : 37.

Junior Topic : THE GROWING FAME OF JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 7-12.

Memory Verse : A great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came to him. MARK 3 : 8 b.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : WHY THE PEOPLE FOLLOWED JESUS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE SECRET OF JESUS' FAME.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will get much from a discussion of what would happen in their town if the news should be passed around that Jesus was in the next town and was healing the sick and preaching wonderful sermons. Speak of this and that sick person known to the pupils. What would their relatives and friends do if they knew that Christ was so near at hand? Then tell the story of the lesson and emphasize the teaching that Christ is really in their town and is ready to give to all the sick and troubled ones just the help they need the most. Make it plain that that help is not always the healing of the body.

The Older Classes will ask themselves the question, "Just what do the great masses of men to-day think of Jesus Christ? Do they regard him as merely a good and wise man, or as the Son of God? For what do they look to him? If their attitude toward him is not what it should be, is the church responsible? And what can the church do to cause men to turn to Jesus as their Saviour from sin?" These are weighty questions, and they come fairly and immediately out of our lesson.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What is the right attitude for Christians to take with reference to faith healing?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The first passage, midsummer of A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry; the second passage, April, A.D. 29, in the third year of his ministry.

Place. — Some unnamed region on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; the second passage, the land of Gennesaret, the northwest portion of the same lake shore.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Instances of Christ's popularity with common people.
Causes of Christ's popularity.
The place of miracles in Christ's work.
Marketplaces in the Bible.
Faith illustrated in the Gospels.
What Christ said about human needs.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Why the People Followed Jesus.

I. THE HEALER AND THE THRONG, MARK 3 : 7-12.

A great multitude.
Preaching from a boat.
"Thou art the Son of God."
Jesus and the needs of men.

II. THE TOUCH OF FAITH, MARK 6 : 53-56.

The people knew him.
The sick in the marketplaces.
The border of his garment.
Faith and what it will do.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Earliest Gospel, by Menzies. Chadwick in *The Expositor's Bible* (Mark). Gould in *The International Critical Commentary*. Swete's *Mark*. Rice's *Commentary on Mark*. Bruce in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. Bickersteth in *The Pulpit Commentary*. Robertson's *Lessons on the Gospel of St. Mark*. Parker's *People's Bible*. Horton's *Caricatures of St. Mark*. McKenzie's *A Door Opened*. Faris's *The Book of Faith in God*. McLeod's *The Fragrance of Christian Ideals*. Grenfell's *The Adventure of Life*. Hastings's *The Christian Doctrine of Faith*. Crane's *Why I Am a Christian*. Woods's *Modern Discipleship and What It Means*. Palmer's *Providence and Faith*.

MARK 3: 7. And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judæa,

8. And from Jerusalem, and from Ī-dū-mæ'-ā, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him.

I. **THE HEALER AND THE THRONG**, Mark 3: 7-12. Last week we watched the increasing hostility of the Pharisees, scribes, and Herodians against Jesus, and saw one reason for it to be Christ's opposition to the foolish and burdensome ceremonial rules which these people had loaded upon the laws of Moses. Another reason, which was not brought out in last week's lesson, was Christ's rapidly growing popularity with the common people, and this we are to study in to-day's lesson, discovering the reasons for that popularity. In the course of the lesson we shall learn why the world to-day, in spite of its selfishness, carelessness, and sinfulness, still admires, loves, and reveres Jesus Christ far above any person who has ever lived.

7. **And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea.** The Sea of Galilee, the only large body of water in Palestine. It is about twelve and a half miles long, and eight miles broad in the widest part. It is about 150 feet deep, and lies about 600 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. It is a lovely body of water, and has been compared to the Lake of Lucerne, the Lake of Geneva, and Loch Lomond. Matt. 12: 15 states that Christ's withdrawal was on account of the plotting of his enemies; he had much to do before he could allow their plots to come to a crisis; he had not yet laid the firm foundation of his church. "Therefore he withdrew from the plots which ripen most easily in cities, the hotbeds of intrigue, to the open coast. It is his first retreat before opposition, and careful readers of the Gospels must observe that whenever the pressure of his enemies became extreme, he turned for safety to the simple fishermen, among whom they had no party, since they had preached no gospel to the poor, and that he was frequently conveyed by water from point to point, easily reached by followers, who sometimes indeed outran him upon foot, but where treason had to begin its wiles afresh." — *G. A. Chadwick*. "It does not seem probable, in these circumstances, that he would choose the part of the lake near to Capernaum which was the scene of his usual work, because it was a place of resort. This time he was seeking retirement, and he would find it in some more secluded part of the lake." — *Prof. Ezra P. Gould*. **And a great multitude from Galilee followed and from Judæa.** Very likely they camped upon the beach. It must indeed have been a large crowd, including contingents from regions so widely separated. Galilee was the northern division of Palestine, Judæa the southern, containing Jerusalem; Samaria was the third division, lying between. The Samaritans were not welcome among the Jews and did not mingle freely with them; if any of them were in this company, they were not thought worth mentioning.

8. **And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa.** Idumæa is the Greek name of the ancient Edom ("red"), the land of Esau and his descendants. The country was called the Red Land because of its red sandstone hills. It lay south of Palestine, and was especially prominent at this time because the Herods came from there. **And beyond the Jordan.** "The East, too, sent its contribution from Peræa. According to Josephus Peræa extended on the east of Jordan from Machærus to Pella; i.e., it lay chiefly between the Jabbok and the Arnon; but, like Idumæa, the name seems to have been somewhat loosely applied." — *Prof. Henry Barclay Swete*. **And about Tyre and Sidon.** These came from the northwest. "Tyre meaning 'rock,' and Sidon meaning 'fishery,' were the two mother cities of Phœnicia, on the Mediterranean Sea. They were regarded as the oldest cities in that region, and are now represented by the modern towns of Sur and Saida. Sidon is about twenty miles north of Tyre or Sur." — *Rev. E. W. Rice, D.D., LL.D.* On account of these inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon who thus saw and heard Jesus, he "could not be hid" when at a later time he went to that northern region for rest and solitude (Mark 7: 24). **A great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him.** "It is a very external and vulgar kind of sensation that the evangelist describes; the people flock together, not because echoes of Jesus' teaching reached their conscience, but because they have heard of his works." — *Prof. Allan Menzies*.

9. **And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him.** He did not make this provision because of dislike of contact with the multitude, but because of the plotting against him and

9. And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him:

10. For he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him.

11. And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12. And he charged them much that they should not make him known.

the possibility that a mob might be stirred up to attack him, when flight by water would be the easiest escape. The boat was probably furnished by his fisher disciples, Peter and Andrew or James and John, and their stout arms were ready at the oars.

10. For he had healed many. Few value health while they have it, but as soon as they lose it, or their dear ones lose it, it is seen at once to be one of the main foundations of happiness and prosperity. Pain is a most efficient teacher, and its lessons are sure to be heeded. Even the charlatans, whose claims of healing powers are so silly that one would think they could fool nobody, will draw great crowds of sufferers around them; how much more the Divine Healer whose mere word could make a leper whole in an instant, open blind eyes, and even bring back the dead to life? **Insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him.** The word translated "plagues" means literally "scourges," going back to the idea that severe sicknesses are punishments for sin; this they often are, but by no means always. "Pressed upon him" is literally "so that they knocked against him; one of Mark's vivid touches. They hoped to obtain a cure by contact anyhow brought about, even by rude collision." — *Prof. A. B. Bruce.*

11. And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him. "It is worthy of notice that the afflicted people 'fell upon him,' but the unclean spirits 'fell down before him,' and this not out of love or devotion, but out of abject fear, dreading lest he should drive them out of the 'possessed,' and send them before their time to their destined torment. It is just possible that this homage paid to our Lord may have been an act of cunning — a ruse, as it were, to lead the people to suppose that our Lord was in league with evil spirits." — *Dean Bickersteth.* And cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. The Messiah, the earthly incarnation of Deity. These evil spirits, being of the invisible world, seem to have had earlier knowledge than any man of Christ's nature and mission; that is, earlier than any man who did not learn of it through an angel.

12. And he charged them much that they should not make him known. Christ was not ready to declare his deity. He knew that to do so would rouse against him an array of enemies strong enough to kill him. He had first to win and train a body of disciples numerous enough to continue the work he had begun. And even if he were ready for the proclamation of his Messiahship, he would not have it made by demons.

JESUS AND THE NEEDS OF MEN. "His extraordinary popularity was not at all to the taste of Jesus. Bent on getting at men, he was well aware that crowds are often the great hindrance to individual work. It was impossible for him to explain the nature of the kingdom of God to vast masses of indiscriminate hearers. Their presence rendered it necessary for him to speak in parables. He therefore seeks the mountain-top and the house as a refuge from the multitude." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.* Thus in our day the Saviour often shuts his followers into lonely



Jesus Preaching from a Boat.

Hofmann.

MARK 6:53. And when they had crossed over, they came to the land unto Ġen-nēs'-ā-rēt, and moored to the shore.

places, places of sorrow and difficulty and obscurity, that he may have them to himself and be able, apart from their fancied needs, to meet more fully the real needs of their lives.

"I do not want to get rid of the problems, perplexities, and responsibilities of existence, for life would be meaningless and colorless without them; what I need is to know how to meet my difficulties and triumph over them." — *Dr. Frank Crane.*

Jesus meets the needs of men to-day through the men who have received his Spirit and radiate his love. "English students used to say that they felt better all day if they could meet Maurice in the morning. The sight of President Woolsey, as he crossed the college grounds, was a benediction upon the students who saw his quiet walk, and looked with reverence upon the bending form. That is a beautiful tribute to a simple life which is on the stone by the grave of a good woman who rests in Mt. Auburn; only these words: 'She was so pleasant.'" — *Alexander McKenzie.*

The following beautiful poem shows how Jesus met the needs of mothers and children, and pictures what must have been, in its essentials, a common experience among the crowds that thronged him.

"The Master has come over Jordan,
Said Hannah, the mother, one day;
'He is healing the people who throng him,
With a touch of his finger, they say.
And now I shall carry the children,
Little Rachel and Samuel and John;
I shall carry the baby, Esther,
For the Lord to look upon.'

"The father looked at her kindly;
But he shook his head and smiled:
'Now, who but a doting mother
Would think of a thing so wild?
If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever, 'twere well;
Or had they the taint of the leper,
Like many in Israel.' —

"Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan;
I feel such a burden of care:
If I carry it to the Master,
Perhaps I shall leave it there.
If he lay his hands on the children,
My heart will be lighter, I know;
For a blessing forever and ever
Will follow them as they go.'

"So, over the hills of Judah,
Along the vine-rows green,
With Esther asleep on her bosom,
And Rachel her brothers between,
'Mong the people who hung on his teaching,
Or waited his touch and his word,
Through the row of proud Pharisees hastening,
She pressed to the feet of the Lord.

"Now why shouldst thou hinder the Master,
Said Peter, 'with children like these?
Seest not how, from morning till evening,
He teacheth, and healeth disease?'
Then Christ said, 'Forbid not the children;
Permit them to come unto me':
And he took in his arms little Esther,
And Rachel he set on his knee.

"And the heavy heart of the mother
Was lifted all earth-care above,
As he laid his hands on the brothers,
And blest them with tenderest love;
As he said of the babes in his bosom,
'Of such is the kingdom of heaven';
And strength for all duty and trial
That hour to her spirit was given." — *Julia Gill.*

"No matter how many million bricks go into a building, each brick is handled as if it were the only one. It was never the intention of the Master to save cities in blocks or brigades. 'Oh, Love that wilt not let ME go.'" — *Rev. Malcolm James McLeod, D.D.*

II. THE TOUCH OF FAITH, Mark 6:53-56. Between the extract just considered and this passage stretches a portion of Mark's Gospel which is crowded with events. Our Lord had definitely chosen his twelve disciples, and had instructed them with the Sermon on the Mount and many other parables and teachings. He had sent them forth on their first missionary journey and had received their report on their return. He had worked many marvellous miracles and had unfolded their teachings to the disciples. He had just fed five thousand men with five barley cakes and two small fishes. This was on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and after the miracle he had withdrawn to a solitary place for prayer, sending the disciples across the lake in a boat. A storm came up and the boat was in a terrible plight when Jesus came to them walking on the sea, and Peter made his attempt to go to Jesus on the water, but failed. On Christ's arrival the storm suddenly ceased, and the amazed disciples speedily reached the shore. It was all a wonderful revelation of the Saviour and education of the disciples' faith.

53. And when they had crossed over, they came to the land unto Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. "The land of Gennesaret is only mentioned here and in Matt. 14:34. It is the same as the modern *el-Ghuweir*, a fertile crescent-shaped plain on the northwestern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret, about three miles

54. And when they were come out of the boat, straightway *the people* knew him,

55. And ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

in length and one in width. From its sheltered situation, and especially from its depression of more than 500 feet below the level of the ocean, its climate is of an almost tropical character. Josephus speaks of it as if it were an earthly paradise, in which every kind of useful plant grew and flourished." — *Cambridge Bible*. The Sea of Galilee is sometimes called the Lake of Gennesaret from this region.

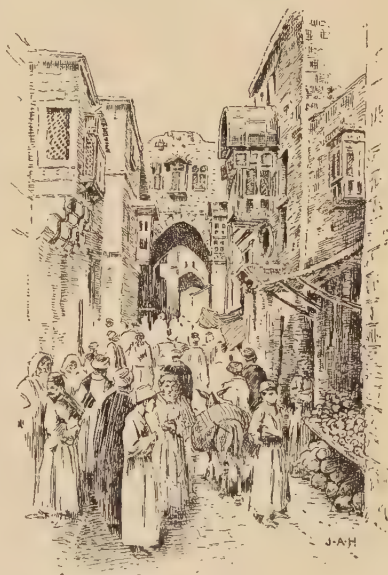
54. And when they were come out of the boat, straightway *the people* knew him. The night was past and it was full daylight. Many of the inhabitants had doubtless been in Capernaum and the other nearby places where Christ had taught and had worked miracles.

55. And ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. The beds were thin mattresses or pallets, serving here as stretchers. Our Lord seems to have moved freely about the whole region, and the determined sick folks who could get about on their own legs or beg or hire carriers, followed him about as rumor reported his movements, keeping up the pursuit till they found him — a vivid description of a desperate search. They *ran*; that is, they moved as fast as they or their bearers could, lest the Healer should escape them.

56. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country. Villages were distinguished from cities by their size, and also usually by the fact that the city was surrounded by a wall.

They laid the sick in the marketplaces.

"Near the gates within the city were to be found open places, the centers of communal life. Here contracts were entered into, assemblies for judicial or deliberative purposes were held, buying and selling took place, and public announcements were made. Here was the center of social intercourse in general. Here strangers who had no friend in the city passed the night." — *Standard Bible Dictionary*. "The people seized the opportunity of Christ's presence to secure the blessings which they most desired. If men were so anxious promptly to seize a physical advantage, how intense should be their urgency in seeking the higher blessings of moral and intellectual redemption and sanctification?" — *Joseph Parker*. And besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment. This was very different from the rough pressing upon Jesus mentioned in the first part of this lesson. This crowd was reverent, and full of faith. They did not "knock against" him, but humbly begged permission to touch — not his sacred person, but the mere hem of his garment. And as many as touched him were made whole. "Such numbers came to receive succor that the laying on of his hands was no longer possible. But faith, not personal contact, was the condition of healing. The request to be allowed to touch the hem of his robe sufficed to prove that humility and trust were there, and with these his lovingkind-



Marketplace, Jerusalem.

ness had free course. So is it still in the blessings of the soul." — *Rev. A. Irving Robertson, D.D.*

FAITH AND WHAT IT WILL DO. "Faith means a conscious and deliberate grasping of the outstretched hand of God. Faith means an absolute confidence in Christ, that he is what he says he is, and will do what he says he will do. Faith brings heaven down to earth. To faith God is the greatest reality in all the world. Faith is my response to his seeking love." — *Canon Edward S. Woods.*

There are some things that we must not expect faith to do. "Years ago I learned that St. Thomas Aquinas defined omnipotence as the power to do everything possible; that is, everything that does not involve contradiction. The Master of the stars cannot make two stars and two other stars count up to five stars, nor make any one star that has been never to have been. The supreme Lover who is very Love cannot cease to love, nor can Truth itself pronounce or live a lie. God cannot be cruel or treacherous, an unjust judge, a tyrannous ruler — because he is no God if not good. In short, he cannot deny himself. And is not the consistency of the nature of God pledged to maintain the manhood of man? Would not that consistency be broken, contradicted, if man were made his puppet, his mere tool and thing?" — *William Scott Palmer.* Therefore our faith must move along the lines defined by the nature of God, the nature of man, and the laws which God has ordained for man.

"I could cite many instances where faith in Christ has very apparently altered a man's whole outlook and action. A fisherman of exceptional physique had been the victim of uncontrollable temper, and various of his drinking sprees had ended in the police station as the result of violent assaults on others. He had destroyed his home and his wife had left him. He was rapidly ruining his own splendid physique, and the lives of all those with whom he came in contact. Suddenly he became sober and peaceful, built up his home again and took back his wife, and developed an absolutely unselfish passion to try to save his fellows from the slavery that had been his. He always claimed that his faith in Christ was the secret of his change." — *W. T. Grenfell.*

"G. Stott, one of the early missionaries in Wenchow, China, had this experience: 'Once I fell very short of funds — in fact, so short that I had not a dollar in the house. I was without a dollar for twenty or twenty-one days, and I had nearly twenty people in the house to feed. It is one of our principles never to incur debt, and my food was nearly exhausted. Well, there was a man of whom I had bought rice several times; and he came to me one day and said, "Mr. Stott, how is it you have not been to order rice? Your rice must be out." I replied, "Well, the rice is nearly gone, but I cannot order any." "Why?" said he. "Well, if you must know the reason, it is simply because I have not the money to pay for it." Soon after that he sent me two loads of rice and 3,000 cash, equal in value to twelve shillings. Well, this rice also was done, and the money was spent; but still no help came. But when that was gone, he again supplied my need, and my tongue would fail to tell you the joy I had with God during those days. I think I never doubted that help would come.' " — *Rev. John T. Faris, D.D., in "The Book of Faith in God," which is full of similar recitals.*

"When trials come we should say, 'My heavenly Father puts this cup of trial into my hands, that I may have something sweet afterwards.' Trial is the food of faith." — *George Müller.*

"Little faith will get very great mercies, but great faith still greater." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

"Our faith sometimes looks as if it stood on small foundations, but it subdues the world." — *Edward N. Packard.*

LESSON VI. — February 5.

JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD AND OPPOSED. — Mark 3:19 b-35; 6:1-6.

PRINT Mark 3:19b-27; 6:1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name.* — JOHN 1:11, 12.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 50 : 4-9.

Primary Topic : FRIENDS MISUNDERSTAND JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 19 b-21, 31-35.

Memory Verse : He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. John 1 : 11.

Junior Topic : FRIENDS MISUNDERSTAND JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 19 b-27.

Memory Verse : John 1 : 11.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : FACING UNAVOIDABLE OPPOSITION.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE MISUNDERSTOOD JESUS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will get a clear picture of the way Christ was misunderstood and opposed by his townsfolk, his friends, and the members of his own family, and will be led to see how his heart must be grieved at the failure of his own church people to-day to love him and serve him as they should. Ask the children what he has a right to expect from them, and why he has a right to expect it. Make them feel a strong desire to fulfil his loving expectations.

The Older Classes have in this lesson a study in relationships and obligations. What does a town owe to Christ ? What does a family owe to him ? What do all our civilized institutions owe to him ? Are we understanding his purposes to-day ? Are we doing his will or opposing him ? These are serious questions. They call for a thoughtful survey of modern life in its relation to the person and claims of Jesus Christ.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What changes would be brought about in modern life if Christians were perfectly loyal to Christ ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Calling of the Twelve, midsummer of A.D. 28, the second year of Christ's ministry. Second tour of Galilee, autumn of the same year. Second rejection at Nazareth, winter of the following year.

Place. — Capernaum. Nazareth.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Henry Drummond's *The Ideal Life*. Newbolt's *Words of Exhortation*. J. D. Jones's *Gospel according to St. Mark*, 1-6 : 6. Edgar DeWitt Jones's *The Inner Circle*. Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Selby's *The Strenuous Gospel*. Ker's *The Victory of Faith*. Hillis's *The Great Re-*

fusal. Clifford's *The Dawn of Manhood*. Stewart's *A King among Men*. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*. Woolsey's *Religion of the Present and of the Future*. Watson's *The Inspiration of Our Faith*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Instances of misunderstanding of Christ.
Opposition to Christ by his friends and relations.
New Testament references to Mary and Christ's brothers.
Carpenters throughout the Bible.
Bible prophets unhonored at home.
Charges brought against Christ during his lifetime.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Misunderstood Jesus.

I. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS FRIENDS, Mark 3 : 19 b-30.

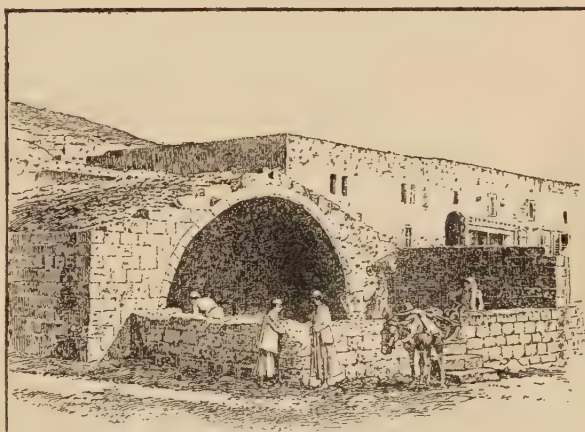
"He is beside himself."
"He hath Beelzebub."
Houses divided against themselves.

II. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS FAMILY, Mark 3 : 31-35.

"Who are my brethren?"
Doing the will of God.
Of Christ's family.

III. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS TOWNSFOLK, Mark 6 : 1-6.

"Is not this the carpenter?"
A prophet without honor.
Understanding Jesus and working with him.



Fountain of the Virgin, Nazareth.

MARK 3 : 19 b. And he cometh into a house.

20. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21. And when his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on him : for they said, He is beside himself.

22. And the scribes that came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Bê-ël'-zê-bûb, and, By the prince of the demons casteth he out the demons.

I. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS FRIENDS, Mark 3 : 19 b-30. 19 b. **And he cometh into a house.** Between the first and the second parts of this verse, as we learn from the other Gospels, much had happened. Our Lord had made choice of his twelve disciples, and with them had gone on a long journey about Galilee, preaching and healing and winning men for his kingdom. Now they are back in Capernaum, Christ's headquarters and the home town of Simon Peter and his brother Andrew ; probably also of James and John.

20. **And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.** We can hardly be mistaken in believing that this graphic touch comes from Mark's informant, Peter. Christ and his disciples were doubtless weary with their journey, and Peter's mother-in-law, grateful because Christ had healed her of the fever, was eager to place before them the best meals the house could afford, but the crowd would not even give them leisure for eating. Christ's tour had evidently been remarkably successful in arousing popular enthusiasm, and he returned to Capernaum with a vast reputation, so that the entire city was eager to see and hear the wonderful new leader.

21. **And when his friends heard it, they went out to lay hold on him.** The commentators connect this verse with verse 31, regarding "his friends" as being his mother and his brothers, and this verse as describing their setting out from Nazareth to compel him, if possible, to return home with them. It does not seem likely, however, that this reference would be so far separated from verse 31 if it had to do with the same event, nor would Mark be likely to call Mary and Christ's brothers merely "his friends." **For they said, He is beside himself.** Christ had given up his gainful occupation, and spent his entire time in wandering about Palestine, helping people and teaching them great truths. To a worldly-minded person such unselfishness always seems little short of insanity, while religious devotion always appears crazy to those who have no real belief in the things of the spirit. A man may give himself passionately to money-making, and he will be called hard-headed and practical ; but let him fix his mind as ardently on the eternal interests of human souls and he will hardly escape being considered a lunatic.

22. **And the scribes that came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub.** We have already learned about the party of scribes (lawyers) and Pharisees that had come down from Jerusalem ("down" because Jerusalem was on high ground and also because it was the chief city of Palestine) to watch the popular new religious teacher and find ground for a serious charge against him (Luke 5 : 17) ; they have appeared repeatedly thus far in Mark's Gospel. Christ had just healed one of the most desperate cases ever brought to him, a demoniac who was both blind and dumb. Our Lord caused him to speak and see (Matt. 12 : 22), and the cure was so amazing as to suggest the blasphemous charge that Jesus had this authority over demons because he was himself under the control of the demon Beelzebub. This Beelzebub (Beelzeboul) was a heathen deity whose name may mean "Lord of the house," that is, "chief of the household of demons." It is in allusion to this meaning of the name that Christ goes on to talk about the unlikely division of Beelzebub's *house* or *kingdom*, just as in Matt. 10 : 25 he says, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household !" **And, By the prince of the demons casteth he out the demons.** One mark of a man of an evil spirit is that he attributes an evil spirit to every one else. His eyes are jaundiced and he sees all the world yellow. If we note in ourselves a tendency to find fault with others, and suspect them of all kinds of wickedness, we should see in that tendency a proof of our own spiritual danger.

23. **And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables.** "The word 'parable' in the Old Testament represents a term which is used for proverbs (1 Sam. 10 : 12 ; Prov. 1 : 1, etc.), dark, enigmatical utterances (Ps. 78 : 2 ; Prov.

23. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24. And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25. And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

26. And if Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27. But no one can enter into the house of the strong *man*, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong *man*; and then he will spoil his house.

1 : 6, etc.), mystical, prophetic intimations (Num. 23 : 7, 18, etc.), and figurative speech with more or less of a narrative in it (Ezek. 17 : 1-10). In the New Testament it is applied to proverbial sayings (Luke 4 : 23); institutions, persons, or events of a typical or suggestive character (Heb. 9 : 9; 11 : 19); illustrative statements or comparisons (Matt. 15 : 15; Luke 6 : 39); but usually in the Gospels to comparisons or similitudes containing something of a story. Here it has the more general sense of an illustrative or analogical statement. The Fourth Gospel has allegories, not parables proper." — *New Century Bible*. **How can Satan cast out Satan?** How can one even think of Satan, after he has gained control of a man, voluntarily relinquishing that control? Can we imagine Satan, the arch-enemy of man, becoming his own enemy? Satan is the common Jewish name for "the prince of the demons," the fallen angel who, after leaving heaven, became the ruler of hell. Here, and in many other passages, it is made perfectly clear that our Lord believed in a personal devil.

24. **And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.** As we write, China is in the throes of a civil war which is rendering that vast country, with its four hundred million inhabitants, one of the weakest nations on earth. Only the jealousy of the great powers of one another prevents one or more of them from entering and seizing the country. So with Satan's kingdom: if Christ belonged to that kingdom, in driving the demons from their victims he would be waging civil war and splitting Satan's realm in twain.

25. **And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.** "The word 'house' has, of course, its rarer meaning of 'household,' the meaning which it has in John 4 : 53 and 1 Cor. 16 : 15. It is translated 'household' in Phil. 4 : 22. If thorough intestine antagonism be once an accomplished fact in a family, that family must be *broken up*, and thus *broken down*." — *James Morison*.

26. **And if Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.** Psychologists recognize the phenomenon of double personality, a strange mental condition in which one seems to be two persons, having entirely different characteristics, different memories, different abilities, recognizing different names and different sets of friends. This unusual condition, which Stevenson made the basis of his weird tale, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," though rare in the realm of mind, is common in the spiritual realm. Who of us but perceives, when he would do good, that evil is present with him, as Paul says, and recognizes this "war in his members"? No life under such circumstances can be strong and effective, but is disjointed, aimless, and wavering. Christ's life, on the contrary, was a glorious unity, firm, well-directed, consistent, unwavering through all his days.

27. **But no one can enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods.** Satan is the strong man, not strong in himself, but rendered powerful by humanity's weak yielding to temptations. His house is this world, his goods are the souls of men, their peace, happiness, purity, and power. By conquering temptation in his own life, and by exorcising evil spirits from the lives of others, our Lord took spoil of Satan, and left him only an empty house. **Except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.** The servile attitude of the demons whom Christ exorcised shows how Christ "bound" Satan. They begged to be let alone. On one occasion they begged to be sent into a herd of swine. They knew that Christ was Master and could do with them what he would.

THE ETERNAL SIN. In the conclusion of this discourse our Lord spoke the most solemn and terrible of all his warnings. Because the scribes, well knowing that he was doing God's work, had dared in their cruelty and wickedness to say of him that

he was harboring a devil, our Lord declared that there was such a thing as an eternal sin, a sin that God could not forgive because man would not desire or ask forgiveness, the sin of blasphemy against God's Holy Spirit. "Those who go mourning because they think they have committed this sin, prove by their very broken-heartedness that they have not committed it. When a man gets into the grip of 'eternal sin' he does not care — he is past feeling. The fact that men feel, is proof they are not in it. As Bishop Chadwick says, 'No penitent has ever been rejected for this guilt, for no penitent has ever been thus guilty.'" — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

HOUSES DIVIDED AGAINST THEMSELVES. Christianity is split up into so many sects that it is a house divided against itself. There are two hundred Protestant denominations in the United States alone. We sadly need to get together on the essentials and to become a unit in fighting wickedness.

The temperance forces are not united as they should be, though they are doing far more co-operative work than formerly, and as a result are winning far greater victories. Far too many organizations are working along different lines for international peace. In all reform movements we are fighting a united foe and can never conquer except as we advance all together.

Nothing works greater injury to the cause of Christ than church quarrels. Nothing so promotes Christianity as for worldlings to be compelled to exclaim, "How these Christians love one another!" It is by loving and hearty co-operation that all mankind will be won to our Redeemer.

It is most surprising to find Mary among those that regard Jesus as insane and would confine him. We are expressly told that his brothers did not believe in him, but of her we are told that she "kept in her heart" the indications that her Son was the Messiah (Luke 2:51). Some think that she was present on this occasion to mediate between Jesus and his other friends and relatives; but if so, why did Christ include her (verse 35) in his disapproval? "It is thus remarkable that in the only two instances, until the crucifixion, where Mary figures in the Gospel — the marriage at Cana and the passage before us — she appears in order to be reproved by the Saviour, and to be placed, as far as the mere maternal relation is concerned, below obedient servants of God. These passages must be regarded as protests laid up in store against the eminence which the Roman church assigns to Mary, and especially against that newly established dogma of her being without sin from her birth, which they so signally contradict." — *President Theodore D. Woolsey.*

II. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS FAMILY, Mark 3:31-35. "WHO ARE MY BRETHREN?" "There came to Christ, while he was in the house, and thronged with the people, his own mother and his brothers. They wished to see him, and he wished to see them, beyond a doubt, but he took the opportunity to explain to the people that there was for him a new test of relationship, a new basis of a family, which will widen while it excludes. The new household is to be based upon the desire to do the will of God." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

DOING THE WILL OF GOD. Christ's friends and relatives "did not object to his work, but to the spirit in which he did it. They would have wished him to do God's will cautiously — being careful about his meat and drink; they were dismayed because he did God's will intently, forgetting himself altogether. Jesus was counted mad simply because he was enthusiastic. Our Master illustrates that passion for religion which is prepared to sacrifice everything, even life itself, in the service of God, and his family represents for the time the worldly mind which regarded him with angry suspicion, and has been pouring cold water on enthusiasm ever since." — *John Watson ("Ian Maclaren").*

OF CHRIST'S FAMILY. If we are of Christ's true family, the charge of madness that was brought against him is almost certain to be brought against us. "A Christian must be different from other people. Time has not changed the essential difference between the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christ. They are radically and eternally different. And from the world's standpoint still Christianity is eccentricity." — *Henry Drummond.*

"Let us confess that most of us have a weakness in favor of relationship to the great and famed of earth. If you should visit a certain city of the South the residents will point with pride to the home of a famous Confederate general's widow. Ride through the streets of a Northern city and your guide will not fail to show you the home of a former President's daughter. Should you chance to visit a little Western village and remain for a single day you will be told that on such and such a street resides a full cousin of Mr. Bryan. Imagine, if you can, the sensation that would

MARK 6: 1. And he went out from thence; and he cometh into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2. And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and *what mean* such mighty works wrought by his hands?

follow if a blood relation of Jesus of Nazareth should be discovered. What headlines the daily papers would print! How the people would crush and crowd and crane their necks to see a cousin of Jesus of Nazareth walk down the streets! And yet, the flesh and blood relatives of Jesus were farther from him than Mary Magdalene, the one-time outcast; or Zacchæus, the ex-chief publican and one-time grafter; or the penitent robber on the cross; or Jerry McAuley, or S. H. Hadley, or a million others who find fellowship with him in spirit. We have heard with interest much of the so-called 'first families,' but few of us have esteemed highly the real 'first family,' into which every man and woman may enter most freely." — *Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones, D.D.*

III. JESUS MISUNDERSTOOD BY HIS TOWNSFOLK, Mark 6: 1-6.

1. And he went out from thence. From Capernaum, where he had just raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue. And he cometh into his own country.

The news of the stupendous miracle he had just worked caused Jesus to be pressed upon by great throngs, to escape which he retired to Nazareth, the village of his peaceful childhood, whose unbelieving townsfolk had already driven him out once, and forced him to make Capernaum his headquarters. But Christ would give them one more chance. And his disciples follow him. When driven out, he was only a solitary young man, full of teachings that seemed revolutionary and unlawful to his neighbors. Now he returns with a great reputation and with a band of twelve attached followers, themselves also preachers and evangelists.

2. And when the sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue. He went there for a vacation, but Christ's was no vacation religion. It was his custom to go to church every Sabbath, and, being there, the distinguished teacher would inevitably be asked by the rulers of the synagogue to speak to the people; and Christ seized all such opportunities, as he would have his followers seize them. And many hearing him were astonished. They were amazed at his skill as an orator, his knowledge of the Scriptures, and the authority with which he spoke. Saying, Whence hath this man these things? Only three words in the Greek: "Whence these to this?" And, what is the wisdom that is given unto this man. "This man" is contemptuous, as in the preceding question: "this common fellow," "this day laborer." And *what mean* such mighty works wrought by his hands? What do they signify as to his real nature, his origin, his destiny? Christ wrought his miracles primarily in order to excite just such questions as these. He had refused



Nazareth.

3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Jō'sēs, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended in him.

to work miracles in Nazareth, because of the skepticism of the Nazarenes, but by this time every one knew that he was a miracle-worker, the mightiest the world had ever known.

3. Is not this the carpenter. "In the beginning" God had set the stamp of his approval on human labor, and all along had chosen as the chief toilers for the higher



The Shadow of the Cross.

Holman Hunt.

and spiritual welfare of Israel and the world those who were devoted to useful handicrafts or pastoral pursuits." — *John Clifford*. Dr. Clifford instanced Abraham the farmer, Moses the shepherd, David the shepherd, Elisha the farmer: and among moderns, Burns the ploughman and William Morris the interior decorator. "Jesus was trained in a way which is open to every one of us. He did not go to the celebrated school or college in Jerusalem, taught by the wisest teachers among the Jews. He did not travel far and wide, and mingle with men of power and learning, to learn how to reach men's hearts with a message which has echoed down the centuries. Instead he lived the life of a poor, hard-working laborer." — *Mary Stewart*. The son of Mary. Matt. 13: 55 inserts, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Joseph was evidently much older than Mary, and was dead long before

this time. He does not appear after the journey to Jerusalem when Christ was twelve years old, which was twenty years earlier than this event. And brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? Some think that these were the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, and therefore only the half brothers of Jesus. In that case they would be older than Jesus and would feel themselves qualified to take charge of him. Others think that they were the children of Joseph and Mary, born after Jesus, and therefore younger than he. These four young men did not believe on Christ (John 7: 5) before his resurrection, but after that great event they were counted among his disciples (Acts 1: 14). James especially became the head of the church in Jerusalem, the author of our Epistle of James, "the Gospel of Common Sense," a man of wisdom and power. Judas was probably the author of our Epistle of Jude. Of Joses (named from his father Joseph) and Simon nothing further is known. And are not his sisters here with us? Jesus had, as we learn from this verse, at least two sisters, but their names are nowhere mentioned, — an indication of the slight regard in

4. And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages teaching.

which women were held in those days. And they were offended in him. "Offended" is in the Greek the word which has given us our "scandalized." The Greek *skandalon* was "the stick in a trap on which the bait is placed, and which springs up and shuts the trap at the touch of an animal. Hence, generally, a snare, a *stumbling-block*." — *Marvin R. Vincent*. "The people of Nazareth ought to have been a valiant bodyguard of their own Prophet, to have held up his hands, and to have copied the early heroes of faith. They were attendants at the most highly favored synagogue of the land. The Lord had sojourned here for a generation, whilst he paid brief visits only to other places. They could watch his demeanor, weigh his claims, walk by his side, propound their questions. If like Simeon and Anna they had been waiting for Israel's redemption, they would have recognized in him one sent by the Father and have confessed his authority." — *Rev. Thomas T. Selby*.

4. And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country. Christ had uttered the same saying before in the same synagogue (Luke 4: 24), and John 4: 44 indicates that the saying was often on his tongue. In his first sermon at Nazareth he gave the illustrations of the widow of Zarephath feeding Elijah and Elisha's healing of Naaman the Syrian leper. The saying is especially notable because by it Christ lays claim to be regarded as in the great succession of Hebrew prophets. And among his own kin, and in his own house. These words show where the sting of the experience was — Christ's rejection by those nearest and dearest, those who he had every right to expect would be his most ardent supporters. Over and over in the history of the world the wisest and noblest of men and women have been despised by those closest to them, just because familiarity is allowed to breed contempt. Those who come from a distance, wearing the air of strangeness and mystery, are allowed to do with us what they will, while we are blind to the greatness in our own town or perhaps in our own home.

5. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. The healing even of a few by the laying on of hands would have been regarded with amazement at the beginning of Christ's ministry, but he had fed five thousand with a lad's lunch, he had quieted a storm at a word, he had driven out demons, and he had even raised the dead, so that these cases of healing did not amaze the people as once would have been the case. This tendency of miracle to become commonplace is one reason why Christ laid less stress upon it than upon his preaching. These "few sick folk" were those whose faith was able to rise above the Nazarene morass of doubt, and Christ's spirit leaped eagerly to greet it and reward it. We see upon what his miracles rested. He was always willing and glad to bless, but his gifts must wait for stretched-out hands.

6. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. "As we see this surprise reflected in the face of Jesus, may we not infer that he came down to his work amongst men from a holy world where faith was the all-pervading law!" — *Rev. Thomas G. Selby*. And as Christ marvelled at the lack of faith in those from whom he had a right to expect it, so also he marvelled at the unexpected faith shown by the Capernaum centurion who asked Christ to heal his servant from a distance (Luke 7: 9). "Sometimes faith looks wonderful — we are surprised when we see men believe; and sometimes unbelief looks wonderful — we are surprised that men do not believe." — *Rev. John Ker*. And he went round about the villages teaching. This was Christ's third preaching tour of Galilee; it is probably summarized in Matt. 9: 35.

UNDERSTANDING JESUS AND WORKING WITH HIM. We cannot work with Jesus effectively except as we understand him. The way to understand him is through earnest and long-continued reading of the Bible illumined by the teaching of the Holy Spirit and by much prayer. As we come to understand any part of Christ's will, we must promptly and gladly carry it out; and as we thus work with Christ we shall come to understand him better. It is an endless chain, a blessed progression. It is precisely like our human friendships. We know other men best by working with them. The more we work with them the better we know them, and the better

we know them the more perfectly we can co-operate with them. The circle grows ever stronger and wider, and we can begin at any point of it. The essential thing is to BEGIN.

"Fling yourself into the Christian life with abandon, and you will find the highest happiness. The youth who enters upon the Christian life finds unanticipated rewards. He is like a man who buys a field of wheat, but, digging, finds coal, and mining for coal, strikes iron, and, surprised as he digs for iron, discovers silver, and below that, suddenly gold appears ! Therefore, I call you to the Christian life. I call you to the dedication of mind and heart to the Master and Saviour of the world." — *Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis, D.D.*

LESSON VII. — February 12.

JESUS PICTURES THE KINGDOM OF GOD. — Mark 1 : 14, 15 ; 4 : 1-34.

PRINT Mark 4 : 26-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.* — MATT. 6 : 10.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 145 : 7-13.

Primary Topic : HOW GOD'S KINGDOM GROWS.

Lesson Material : Mark 4 : 26-34.

Memory Verse : Thy kingdom come. Matt. 6 : 10 a.

Junior Topic : HOW GOD'S KINGDOM GROWS.

Lesson Material : Mark 4 : 26-34.

Memory Verse : The kingdom of God is at hand. Mark 1 : 15.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW THE KINGDOM GROWS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE GROWING KINGDOM OF GOD.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will get more from the parable of the sower than from the rest of the lesson, and the teacher may well spend most of the time there, showing the boys and girls how to be good listeners and readers, in church and school and home. The power of attention is one of the most important that one can cultivate, and is well worth a lesson hour by itself. Concentration, enthusiasm, and obedience all follow from it, if the heart is right.

The Older Classes have here a lesson on the kingdom of God in some of its most vital aspects : the way to receive it, the way to promulgate it, the way it grows. These three topics should receive equal time and emphasis. Do not spend much time in discussing what the kingdom is, for that is obvious.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What more can be done to establish the kingdom of God in our town ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The imprisonment of John the Baptist, March, A.D. 28, at the beginning of the second year of Christ's

ministry. The parables of our lesson were spoken in the autumn of the same year.

Place. — John the Baptist was probably imprisoned in the castle of Machærus on the east side of the Dead Sea, opposite the wilderness of Judæa where he had preached. The parables of our lesson were spoken on the seashore at or near Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ as an outdoor man.

References to seed-sowing in the Bible.

Bible teachings based on lamps.

What the Bible has to say about the influence of little things.

New Testament teachings regarding the kingdom of God.

The progress of righteousness.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

David Smith's *Our Lord's Earthly Life*. Lang's *The Parables of Jesus*. Dods's *The Parables of Our Lord* (Matthew). Taylor's *The Parables of Our Saviour*. Gipsy Smith's *As Jesus Passed By*. Herford's *Angels of the Soul*. MacGregor's *Into His Likeness*. Horton's *The Commandments of Jesus*. Marsten's *The Freedom of Christ*. Wesley's *Sermons*, VII, and XIV. A beautiful picture of the scene of the parables of our lesson in Talmage's *Sermons*, Vol. 6. Vaughan's *Stones from the Quarry*. Knight's *The Master's Questions to His Disciples*. Nicoll's *Ten-Minute Sermons*. Chalmers's *Sermons*, Vol. I. Macmillan's

The Daisies of Nazareth. Cox's An Expositor's Note Book. Horton's Cartoons of St. Mark

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : How the Kingdom Grows.

I. JESUS PROCLAIMS THE KINGDOM, Mark 1: 14, 15.

The gospel of God.
The kingdom is at hand.
What the kingdom of God is.

II. THE KINGDOM PLANTED, Mark 4: 1-25.

The parable of the seed and the sower.
The parable of the lamp on the stand.
Establishing the kingdom of God.

III. THE KINGDOM GROWING, Mark 4: 26-34.

Blade, ear, grain, sickle.
The tiny mustard seed.
Progress of the kingdom of God.

I. JESUS PROCLAIMS THE KINGDOM, Mark 1: 14, 15. THE GOSPEL OF GOD. John the Baptist, the heroic herald of the Messiah, had been imprisoned because he dared to rebuke Herod Antipas for the wicked and licentious life he was living. Jesus had been preaching in Judæa, but the misfortune that had befallen his forerunner indicated that it would no longer be safe for him to remain so near the scene of John's preaching, and led our Lord to go back through Samaria to Galilee. But from this time, it seems, Christ took up his ministry more openly, as if he felt that, since the Baptist could no longer preach, his own proclamation of the truth must be doubly vigorous and bold. This was the real beginning of his public ministry, and Mark signalizes it by saying that he preached "the gospel of God." This gospel was the good news of salvation, the wonderful proclamation of God's free offer of forgiveness for sins. No one before this time had authority to make this proclamation. Christ's one object in coming to earth was to preach "the gospel of God," and seal the offer of salvation with his own blood. This is the object of all Christian preachers and teachers, and, for that matter, of all true Christians.

THE KINGDOM IS AT HAND. Christ definitely linked this "gospel of God" with the ancient prophecies of the Messiah, thus asserting that he himself was the object of those prophecies. "The time is fulfilled," he said, meaning that the long-anticipated time of the Messiah had arrived. "The kingdom of God is at hand," he added, signifying the near approach of the Messiah's rule on earth, the rule which was to include the reign of righteousness over the hearts and lives of men. And then, because the kingdom was so near, he urged on all his hearers: "Repent ye, and believe in the gospel." Thus he connected his preaching closely with that of John the Baptist, whose message was, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3: 2).

The kingdom of God was at hand in the person of its King. Where Christ was, the kingdom of heaven was. If Christ enters a human heart, then "the kingdom of heaven is within" such a heart. The kingdom of heaven is close to every one of us, since Christ stands knocking at the door of our heart. The word for each one of us is, therefore, "Repent of your sins, trust in Christ's atonement for them, and let the Saviour in."

WHAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS. The kingdom of God involves the complete surrender of the life to our King, Jesus Christ. "I am afraid that in our zeal to get people into the kingdom or the church we have lowered the standard. 'Only a step to Jesus'? Then it is a very big step. When I came to Jesus it meant coming out, being forsaken, abused, slandered, rejected, despised, hated, persecuted. What does it mean now? A picnic. We have made it too easy, but Jesus never made it so." — *Gipsy Smith*.

"True religion does not consist in any ritual observances, nor, indeed, in any outward thing whatever, in anything exterior to the heart." — *John Wesley*.

We enter the kingdom of God through the door of humility. "Repent, and believe," said Christ. "Repentance" means literally "a change of mind." "While we are self-satisfied, God can make nothing of us. He bids us change our mind about sin, about its evil, about its extent. He bids us change our mind about our attainments, until we are utterly ashamed of ourselves, and cry, 'God be merciful to us sinners.' He bids us change our mind about what we may expect the Saviour to do for us, cease to limit him, and believe the gospel, which tells us that he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to him." — *Rev. G. H. C. MacGregor*.

"There is a mountain in China from which may be observed a singular phenomenon. Ascending nearly a mile, and going to its precipitous face, one may behold in the midst of the dark abyss below a bright sunlit disk of light, around which is

a beautiful halo of the colors of the rainbow. Explained by Professor Tyndall, the appearance is similar to the rainbow : the sun-rays are reflected on the mists of the valley. But, to see it, you must be above the mists. So to behold the glory of the divine love illuminate the sorrow of self and the world, a man must be exalted in the kingdom of God above the mists and damps of this sinful world." — *Rev. Francis E. Marsten, D.D.*

II. THE KINGDOM PLANTED, Mark 4 : 1-25. THE PARABLE OF THE SEED AND THE SOWER. "The great parable of the Sower is the story with which Jesus seems to have ushered in his parabolic method of teaching. It is easy for us to imagine the scene of its first telling. Around the Master were the blue waters of the lake ; before him, on the fringe of bright yellow sand, stood the crowd of Eastern peasants, eager to hear the new Teacher, so unlike the formal and precise rabbis to whom they were accustomed, as he sat there in the freshness and freedom of the open air. It may be that, as he raised his glance, it fell upon some countryman on the slope of the hill behind the beach, sowing his seed, the birds flying around and behind him." — *Bishop Lang.*

This is not the parable of the sower or the seed, but the parable of the four kinds of soil. It is a parable for the hearers of truth, and especially for those that listen to sermons, for Sunday-school pupils, and for readers of good books and papers. The parable is Christ's warning : "Take heed how you hear." So Christ pictures four sorts of hearers and readers, four different ways of receiving the truth.

The seed of the sower fell on four different kinds of ground. "The wayside is not the margin of the highway with which we are so well acquainted, but rather the footpath through the field. The sower could not so nicely adjust his 'cast' as that nothing should fall on the walk which many feet had hardened, and his plough had left unturned. The 'stony ground' was not soil mixed with stones, but rather a thin layer of earth on the top of underlying rock. The thorny ground was not soil in which thorns were already grown rank and strong, but rather ground which had not been thoroughly 'cleaned,' as the farmer phrases it, and in which the seeds of thorns were present in abundance. The good soil was that which was neither trodden into hardness, nor lying in shallowness on the top of rocks, nor full of the roots of weeds that had not been carefully removed ; but ground which had been well prepared for the reception of the seed." — *William M. Taylor.*

The seed on the hard-packed ground represents truth which "goes in at one ear and out at the other." We merely listen to the sermon or read the book or attend the Sunday-school class or the prayer meeting, but take no thought for the truths taught. They do not enter our mind at all, but lie on the surface for the birds — any casual interest that comes along — to make away with. These are the heedless hearers.

The shallow soil is readily warmed by the sun, its heat reflected from the rock which is only a few inches down, and so the seed of truth springs up quickly. We get a fine show of green, but there are no deep roots reaching down into the moist soil, and so such plants soon dry up. The shallow-minded hearers and readers are full of enthusiasm over the new truths and talk much about them, but their zeal lasts only a few days or hours. The truths are promptly forgotten, and their trivial minds are off on a new tack.

The thorn-infested soil "is a picture of the preoccupied heart of the rich, vigorous nature, capable of understanding, appreciating, and making much of the word of the kingdom, but occupied with so many other interests that only a small part of its energy is available for giving effect to Christ's ideas." — *Marcus Dods.* Worldliness and greed are the thorns that most commonly infest such lives, and so Christ warns us especially against them.

The good ground is well prepared, deep, rich, free from the seeds of weeds. It brings forth a rich harvest, but not always a harvest equally good. Some soils return thirty grains for every grain planted ; others sixty, others as many as one hundred. Even among earnest and faithful listeners there are degrees of receptivity and responsiveness. Let us take heed how we hear and how we read. Wherever and whenever God's truth is presented, let us bring to it our most eager anticipation, our keenest attention, and an obedient spirit that seeks only to carry out in life the known will of our Saviour. How he will rejoice with us over a full harvest!

THE PARABLE OF THE LAMP ON THE STAND. In speaking this little parable Christ doubtless had in mind the common lamp of the Galilean peasant, which was nothing but an earthenware saucer filled with oil in which a wick floated, the wick

26. And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth ;

passed through a little opening in the edge of the saucer. He had also in mind the wooden measure holding about a peck, found also in every peasant's home. He mentions also the couch of ordinary use, which was simply a raised wooden framework on which cushions were placed, and was used as a sofa in the daytime. Finally, he referred to the lamp-stand, which was not more than a yard high, and might be made of earthenware like the lamp which was placed on it. Now a lamp, said our Lord, is not put under the measure or the bed, and its light concealed, but it is placed on the lamp-stand, so that it may light the whole room.



Oriental Bed.

What Christ was telling his disciples in secret, because of the contingencies of the time, was to be told to all the world at the right time. Therefore let them take heed and listen carefully, that their minds may be well stocked with the vital truth for the coming time when the truth can be fully disclosed to all men. The more the disciples took into their minds, the more they would be able to take in ; for the power to receive grows with receiving, while the heedless hearer soon loses what little truth he already has.

ESTABLISHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Every one is sowing seed — either the seed of God's kingdom or the seed of Satan's.

Every one is receiving seed in his heart — good seed or bad seed, usually seed of both kinds.

Many men are exceedingly careless regarding the seed they sow and the seed they receive, living lives at hap-hazard spiritually, so that their hearts are like fields run wild, fruitless themselves and scattering the seeds of weeds in all the fields around.

Many men are just as careless regarding the soil into which they receive the seed. They do not cultivate the spiritual life. They do not deepen and enrich the soil of their souls, remove the rocks and the weeds, and keep away from it the trampling feet of worldly cares and selfish interests.

It is only by taking heed to these things that the world can be made better, the kingdom of God established. We cannot reform the world, but each of us can establish the kingdom in his own heart, and help all within reach to do the same. And through the use of money and prayers the influence of any one may extend to the ends of the earth.

“Receive the simple message of Christ honestly, keep it diligently, act on it fearlessly, and you will be able to receive more.

The larger the bin,
The more He puts in.

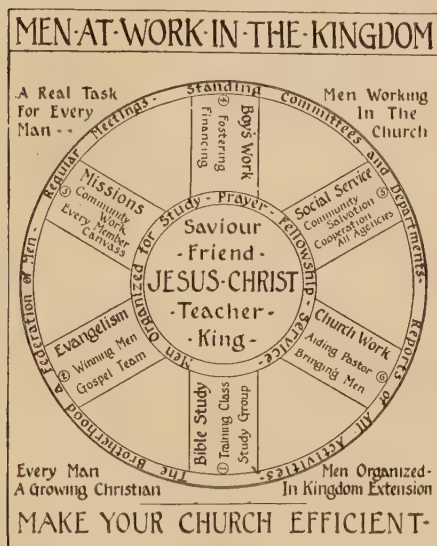
Be all ears when Christ is speaking.” — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

III. THE KINGDOM GROWING, Mark 4 : 26-34. 26. And he said, So is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is illustrated and explained by the following analogy from common life. Vast and complicated and infinitely momentous as it is, the purpose and plan of God is just like the purpose and plan of the farmer who sows seed in a field ; the smallest mirror can reflect the largest mountain, a tiny telescopic lens can make an image of the greatest star. As if a man should cast seed upon the earth. This brief parable, which is a comparison rather than a story, is the only parable found in Mark alone. It is a most suggestive picture of the Infinite Seed-Sower. It represents God as the Creator, scattering everywhere the germs of life. In the early days of the earth he planted here and there the lowest forms of plant and animal life. As the ages passed he drew from the creative treasures life that was more and more complicated, capable of higher and more difficult activity, until at last the seed of man was thrown forth upon the soil of time and

27. And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how.

28. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

bidden to grow. Gradually the Seed-Sower scattered the seeds of human powers, the seeds of thought, of institutions, of the arts, of religion, until at length he came to earth himself in the person of his Son, and was himself the most precious seed of all, descending into the black soil of death and rising in the glory of our immortality. All history, all progress, and all revelation lie within the scope of this brief parable.



Poster.

that the Heavenly Seed-Sower fails to understand and follow every step in the creation of which he is himself the origin and perpetuating cause; but the point is growth of the seed in hidden and mysterious ways. The kingdom of God comes not "with observation." The Spirit is like the wind which blows where it will, and man cannot tell whence it comes or whither it goes. A child will dig up a seed in order to see whether it is sprouting or not, and so will hinder its growth or prevent it altogether. Christian workers must plant the seed of Bible truth and trust to God to bring it to fruition. His sun and rain and chemical processes will do with ease and certainty what all our clumsy manipulation would utterly fail to accomplish. "He that believeth shall not be in haste" (Isa. 28 : 16).

28. The earth beareth fruit of herself. The seed has life in itself, inspired in it by the Creator. Not the wisest scientist or the most skilful craftsman can cause a seed to send forth a stalk and produce leaves and fruit. God has entrusted to man many wonderful secrets, but not the secret of life. So it is also with spiritual life, eternal life, the life which is at the heart of the kingdom of God. God has given that life to the Bible, to the lives and words of good men, to the institutions of the church, and without that life they could do nothing. "I am the life," said Christ, and he declared that he could impart eternal life to men. It is a vain attempt to seek it elsewhere. Christ alone has life in himself. **First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.** The farmer does not expect the wheat stalk to spring up from the ground complete in a day, but looks first for a tiny spot of green, then for the extension of the stalk so gradual that he cannot measure it from day to day, then the slow formation of the ear and the very deliberate ripening of the grains in the ear. He knows that the order of nature is unchanging, and that the ripe grain never appears first above the ground in the spring. Why is it that so many expect from young Christians the wisdom and strength that are only to be found in mature Christians? Why is it that we are disappointed if we do not at

27. **And should sleep and rise night and day.** As is often said, no parable can be made to move on all fours, and this point of the parable is thrown in for the sake of verisimilitude, and not because we are to think of the Divine Seed-Sower as sleeping and rising in some heavenly night and day. There is, however, this true likeness in the matter, that just as nature has during the nights and the winters periods of quiescence when growth is retarded or ceases altogether for the time, so the seeds which God plants grow more rapidly at some times than at others. The heavenly fields must lie fallow occasionally, as well as the fields of earth. **And the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how.** Here again the point is not the farmer's ignorance of the process, for we cannot suppose

29. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30. And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth?

31. It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth,

32. Yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.

33. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it;

the very outset of our Christian lives attain the skill in service and the peace and joy in religion which are the ripe harvest of many years of Christian experience? Why do we complain of the so-called Christian nations and of this so-called Christian era when we fail to find among the kingdoms and republics of earth the righteous fruits which belong only to the fully accepted and well established kingdom of God? We are looking for the harvest before the seed sowing, we are expecting to reap before we have even ploughed.

29. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle. Note "straightway," Mark's (or Peter's) vigorous adverb; the farmer has been very deliberate, very patient, but when the harvest is ripe he is all energy and activity. The sickle is mentioned only here and in Rev. 14 : 14, 15, which pictures the glorified Christ with a sharp sickle in his hand ready to reap his harvest of mankind. We are dealing with tiny farms and primitive days. **Because the harvest is come.** This parable is one that all Christian workers should read often and take carefully to heart. Especially is it adapted to encourage Sunday-school teachers. They sow their seed, often with difficulty and amid many discouragements. They often wait many years without seeing any result of their labors. But they have committed the seed of the Word in faith to the soil of human hearts and have placed it in God's care. Over and over, in many thousands of instances, they have learned years afterward that the seed they thought lost was all the time growing in secret, until at last it sprang up to eternal life. Heaven is full of such glad discoveries and rewards.

30. And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? In the parallel passage, Luke 13 : 18-21, our Lord introduces two little parables in the same way with a question, which is a lively method, and evidently one of his favorite modes. One of the parables in Luke is that of the leaven hid in three measures of meal and leavening it all, the point being the same as in this parable before us, namely, the notable results that often flow from seemingly insignificant causes.

31. It is like a grain of mustard seed. Probably the common mustard is meant. Which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth. Less, Christ must have meant, than all the other seeds which a farmer or gardener would sow; there are smaller seeds when all plants everywhere are considered.

32. Yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches. Greater than the other herbs in the gardens of Palestine, for we are not to think of it as a tree. "In hot countries the mustard (one of the tiniest of seeds) grew to a great size, ten or twelve feet high — as tall, we are told, as a horse and his rider." — *New Century Bible*. So that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof. Birds are very fond of mustard seeds, and were often found beneath the branches or upon them, devouring the seed.

33. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them. One of these parables was that of the leaven, recorded by Luke, and many others, doubtless, were



Mustard Plant.

34. And without a parable spake he not unto them: but privately to his own disciples he expounded all things.

never set down at all. As they were able to hear it. Our Lord, like a wise teacher, graded his instruction, adapting it to the disciples' progress in spiritual understanding. At first his teachings dealt with simple truths, and gradually with truths more and more difficult to comprehend. In his conversation with the learned doctor, Nicodemus, however, Christ plunged at once into perhaps the most obscure yet blessed of all theological topics. In all our Sunday-school teaching we shall succeed or fail as we apply or fail to apply this principle of adaptation to the comprehension of our pupils.

34. And without a parable spake he not unto them. "The parable was an old and familiar method, very congenial to the Oriental mind with its naive fondness for stories and largely employed by the great Rabbis in their interpretation of the Law. And in its proper use it was no mere comparison of heavenly things with earthly but the recognition of a profound relationship between the earthly and the heavenly, the seen and the unseen." — *Prof. David Smith.*

But privately to his own disciples he expounded all things. To the general crowd Christ's parables were like the seed broadcast by a farmer; some of it fell on shallow soil, they were pleased with the story, but went no deeper into its meaning. Other hearers received the parable into earnest and thoughtful minds, and slowly, without their realizing it, the truth grew within them. The great teacher could not go around all his immense audiences, explaining his parables to each of them and questioning them as to their comprehension. To his disciples, however, he could and did give this detailed and individual instruction, that they in their turn, after his departure from this life, might go forth and teach the multitudes. It was all a part of the Saviour's wise plans for the development of his kingdom.

PROGRESS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. "The parable of the mustard seed is a word of hope, needed by the disciples. The kingdom of God as they now saw it was so insignificant as to suggest gloomy anticipations. This parable was spoken to give the assurance of a mighty future." — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond.*

"A grain of wheat does not apparently contain the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear. Experience teaches us that they are all latent therein; but without experience we should not suspect that they could be developed." — *Rev. Robert Vaughan.*

"Let it be remembered that the soil moves, and the seed with it. The scattering of the soil may issue in a richer harvest." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* Thus a congregation or a Sunday-school class or a family breaks up and goes to the ends of the earth bearing the good seed with them. And thus the kingdom is enlarged.

"The seed, which is the Word of God, cannot bring forth fruit of itself without the descent of the Spirit of God — that living water from above upon the soul." — *Thomas Chalmers.*

"It is the law of Nature that great and long-lived trees remain a long time in their young state, while annual plants shoot up at once. The aloe continues for years in the leafy condition; but when it flowers it is a tremendous effort, and sends up a great candelabrum of blossoms twenty feet high. The reason why you are so long children, boys and girls, is that your after-growth may be higher and nobler." — *Rev. Hugh Macmillan, F.R.S.E.*

"But, alas! the kingdom of God is still a coming kingdom, it has not fully come as yet, and cannot while we are so selfish and divided." — *Samuel Cox.*

LESSON VIII. — February 19.

TWO MIRACLES OF POWER. — Mark 4:35—5:20.

PRINT Mark 4:35-41; 5:15-19.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?* — MARK 4:41.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 104:1-8.

Primary Topic: JESUS STILLS THE STORM.

Lesson Material: Mark 4:35-41.

Memory Verse: Even the wind and the sea obey him. Mark 4:41 b.

Junior Topic : JESUS RULES THE STORM.

Lesson Material : Mark 4:35-41. (Compare Mark 5:1-15.)

Memory Verse : Mark 4:41 b.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE UNIVERSAL POWER OF JESUS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS' POWER OVER NATURE AND HUMAN LIFE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will find both incidents of the lesson full of interest. The two stories may be told by the teacher, and then retold by two members of the class chosen by lot. After each pupil has recited his story, the class will add any particulars that may have been omitted. The teachings to be emphasized are (1) Christ's powerful protection and the peace that should fill the hearts of all his children, and (2) Christ's command that all his children should testify for him by their conduct in the home.

The Older Classes will study the evidences of truth inherent in these two narratives, and their bearing on the great doctrine of Christ's Deity. Each of these two points may be assigned to a member of the class, to be discussed under his leadership. A Christian physician may be asked to give his conclusions as to the nature of demon-possession based on a study of this passage.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
What are some of the demons in modern society, and how should Christians be driving them out?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn of A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — The Sea of Galilee, and Gergesa, in the land of the Gadarenes, on the east side of the Sea of Galilee, opposite Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Bible storms and their lessons.
Christ's power over nature.
Rebukes uttered by Jesus.
The nature of demon-possession.
Jewish attitude toward swine.
The Decapolis.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Universal Power of Jesus.

I. JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST ON THE SEA, Mark 4:35-41.

Christ asleep in the storm.
The appeal of the disciples.
"Peace, be still."
"Why are ye fearful?"
"Who then is this?"

II. JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST IN THE SOUL, Mark 5:1-20.

Dwelling in the tombs.
The appeal of the demons.
The demons in the swine.
Clothed and in his right mind.
"Depart from us." "Let me be with thee."
"Tell your friends."
Christ driving out devils.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

J. D. Jones's *The Unsettled Word*. Jefferson's *Things Fundamental*. Burrell's *The Unaccountable Man and For Christ's Crown*. Gipsy Smith's *As Jesus Passed By*. Watkinson's *Studies in Christian Character, Work, and Experience, Second Series*. Moody's *Short Talks*. Liddon's *University Sermons, Second Series*. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*. De Koven's *Sermons*. Buxton's *The Old Road*. Talmage's *Woman: Her Power and Privileges*. Brett's *The Soul's Escape*. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Beecher in *Fast-Day Sermons, 1860-61*. Vaughan's *Christ the Light of the World*. Spurgeon's *Sermons, Vol. 3*. Bacon's *The Simplicity That Is in Christ*. Taylor and Trench on the miracles.

I. JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST ON THE SEA, Mark 4:35-41. We are to study to-day two examples of the miraculous power of Jesus, one taken from his triumphs over nature, the other from his victories over the combined physical and spiritual ills of man. In this lesson the entire subject of miracles may be opened up. Dr. Jefferson, in his strong chapter on miracles in his book, *Things Fundamental*, tells how as a young man he asked Phillips Brooks very earnestly, "Must I believe the miracles?" The great preacher answered promptly, "I should not say that you *must* believe the miracles, I should say that you *may*." The wonders of modern science tend ever to make Christ's miracles more and more credible. "In a former age scientists dared to say what could happen and what could not. The great Laplace declared that it is impossible that stones should fall out of heaven on the earth. Only about sixty years ago Auguste Comte declared it to be impossible for man by any means to determine the composition of any of the heavenly bodies. The illustrious Stephenson asserted it to be impossible for the Mediterranean to be connected with the Red Sea. Did we not say, all of us, only the other day, that it was impossible to see through an oak plank six inches thick? We once thought we could tell what

MARK 4 : 35. And on that day, when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side.

36. And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat. And other boats were with him.

37. And there ariseth a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling.

38. And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion : and they awake him, and say unto him, Teacher, carest thou not that we perish ?

could be and what could not be, but fuller knowledge has made us modest. A man has more presumption than wisdom who asserts with confidence that these New Testament miracles could not have happened." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

35. And on that day, when even was come. It was the day when Christ spoke the parables which we studied last week. The crowd had been so great that he was compelled to address it from a boat, probably one owned by Peter and Andrew or James and John, as he was speaking at or near Capernaum. He saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. Our Lord had had a long, hard day, filled with the most original and thought-provoking teaching the world has ever known ; filled also with controversy of the most exhausting nature. He was thoroughly wearied with both of these, and needed rest. He could not get this where he was continually beset by throngs, but the eastern side of the lake was less thickly settled, and he was not so well known there. Jesus knew well the wisdom of vacations. He was eager to do the work for which he was sent " while it was yet day," but he realized that needed

rest is a gain of time and not a loss, and this lesson he would enforce among his disciples to-day.

36. And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat. This was the boat from which he had been speaking. Jesus did not take time to get heavier garments as protection against a possible storm : he could not wait for that. And other boats were with him. Matt. (8 : 19-22) and Luke (9 : 57-62) tell us of various listeners who were so moved by Christ's teachings that they wished to become



Fishing Boats, near the Shore of the Sea of Galilee.

his disciples and go with him wherever he went ; they may have been among those who followed him in other boats. Nothing is told about their fate in the storm ; they were evidently lost to sight, and we may think of them as getting back home safely after the mysterious calm followed the storm.

37. And there ariseth a great storm of wind. The Sea of Galilee lies 600 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, and the air above it becomes very hot. It rises as it expands, and to take its place swift currents of cold air rush in from the gorges of the mountains on either side of the sea. These winds are very violent and come with extreme suddenness, often blowing in from a perfectly clear sky. It is a terribly dangerous lake. And the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. The tense of the Greek verb implies repeated action, " kept beating." The little fishing boat was fiercely buffeted for a long time.

38. And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. Nowhere else in the Gospels is Christ's sleep mentioned. We see that he was a man like the rest of us,

39. And he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith?

41. And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

subject to human weariness in spite of the vast powers which he possessed, and in need of physical recuperation. The mention of the cushion is one of Mark's unique intimate touches, doubtless due to Peter, whose boat Christ was probably using. It was probably the steersman's leather cushion usually on the low bench which the steersman occupied. **And they awake him, and say unto him, Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?** Luke 8:24 gives a repeated and desperate call: "Master, master, we perish!" As Mark reports it, the disciples seem somewhat reproachful of the Lord; they could not understand how he could sleep in the midst of such peril. Was he ignorant of the danger in which his followers were placed? If he knew, did he not care? It is exactly the feeling that even Christians sometimes entertain when they themselves or their loved ones are compelled to suffer. How can a loving Christ permit it?

39. **And he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.** He might well have rebuked the disciples first, but in pity for their distress he saved that rebuke for later. Our Lord addressed the wind as if it were a foul fiend; and who can say that Satan was not at the bottom of the occurrence, seeking to work what harm he could, striving perhaps in his mad rage to drown the Son of Man and his followers? Christ's command to the sea is the same graphic bidding which he had addressed to the demon in the synagogue of Capernaum (Mark 1:25), meaning literally, "Be muzzled." Christ saw the tossing sea in the guise of a raging beast, but he had a muzzle ready. **And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.** There was no long-continued tossing of the waves, which usually follows a storm on the sea, but an instantaneous peace. "The wind grew tired" is the literal rendering of the beautiful phrase. It sank to sleep like a weary child. "It was a wondrous thing. Who but the Almighty Son of God could have wrought this miracle? Canute, the Dane, attempted it; standing on the heights, when the storm was beating against the rocks beneath, he cried, 'Be still!' and the tempest laughed at him. Xerxes, the Persian, tried it; commanding his courtiers to place his throne upon the beach, he said to the flowing tide, 'No further'; but it drew nearer, nearer, until it lapped his feet and they carried him back and proceeded by his orders to lay a penalty of three hundred lashes on the irreverent sea. Akbar, the Saracen, thought to do it; he spurred his horse down into the water calling out defiance to old Neptune; fetlock deep, knee deep, now to the saddle girth, when the horse, wiser than his rider, turned and fled shoreward and old Neptune roared after him. But Jesus of Nazareth calmed the stormy sea with a word." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

40. **And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith?** They had surely seen through the preceding days and weeks enough of his power to give them faith in him and to inspire them with a peaceful and confident spirit. They had seen him casting out demons, curing the most desperate diseases, and even bringing back the dead to life. Why should they tremble before a storm, with him in their boat?

41. **And they feared exceedingly.** They had feared the storm; now they feared the Conqueror of the storm. So unfamiliar are we with spiritual powers that any supernatural event or manifestation finds us unprepared and leaves us pale and shaken. We are not friends with the upper world, we are too much the creatures of sense. **And said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?** Who could it be but the Creator of the wind and the sea, the One who was in the beginning with God, and without whom was nothing made that was made? The fundamental force in the universe is the force of gravity, for God seems to have used it to set in motion the forces of heat, light, and chemical activity. This gigantic force holds the universe in an orderly whole, and confines the stars to their enormous orbits. The winds and waves move at the bidding of gravity, and when Christ compelled them to subside he proved his mastery of this greatest of all natural forces, a force so mysterious that the wisest scientists have as yet no idea how it works, and yet a force co-extensive with space itself. This may well be regarded as Christ's greatest miracle, and the most conclusive proof of his Deity.

CHRIST IN THE STORMS OF LIFE. Christ seemed to be heedless when the woman of Syro-Phœnicia besought him to heal her daughter and he tried her faith by putting her off ; or again, when the disciples were caught in a storm after the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus delayed coming to them ; or again, when Lazarus was so sick and the sisters sent for him, but he delayed two days before setting out. But " he never is a heedless Christ. He seems to be asleep sometimes and to be indifferent to our distress, but he is watching all the time, and at the fitting moment he will come with help and succor. And be quite sure of this, that to have Christ with you is a pledge and absolute assurance of safety. ' No one shall pluck them out of my hand.' Have him in your life's vessel, and the storm is yet to be born that can overwhelm your little bark. ' Row on, row on,' cried Julius Cæsar to his boatmen as they were crossing the Adriatic in the teeth of a furious storm, ' you are bearing Cæsar and his fortunes.' Well, I do not know that bearing ' Cæsar and his fortunes ' was any guarantee of safety. But if we are bearing Christ we need not fear. ' With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm.' " — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

" Again and again the church of Christ has been all but engulfed, as men might have deemed, in the billows ; again and again the storm has been calmed by the Master, who had seemed for a while to sleep. " — *Dean H. P. Liddon.* This Christ has stilled the political tempests that have assailed the church, the storms of infidelity, the simoon of selfish passion and greed, the whirling tornado of schism and hatred. Christ has been with his church, and his boat has remained safe in the midst of fearful hazards.

If Christ rebuked his disciples for their lack of faith, will he not much more rebuke us ? We have all the evidence of Christ's power and love which they possessed, and added to it the cumulative proofs of all these Christian centuries, not to speak of the manifestations of his goodness which we have experienced in our own lives ; and yet the onset of trials often fills us with fear, and we tremble as if we were all alone on the storm-tossed sea of life. Surely we cannot point scornful fingers at Peter and John and James and Andrew.

II. JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST IN THE SOUL, Mark 5 : 1-20. " In the fifth chapter of Mark — I call that the high-water mark of that Gospel — there

are three persons that were very far gone in the sight of man. One was possessed of devils, another was possessed of an incurable disease, and the other was dead. You couldn't get three harder cases than that anywhere, could you ? If we had them with us now, we would put the first in a madhouse, the second in a hospital for incurables, and the third in the grave ; but Christ was a match for the whole three. Don't think any man or woman is a hard case, and God can't save him." — *D. L. Moody.*

DWELLING IN THE TOMBS. Our Lord, after the storm, reached the country of the Gerasenes, or Gadarenes according to Matt. 8 : 28, or Gergesenes according to Luke 8 : 26, margin. The



first two names are general designations of the district, from important cities in it, which were, however, far from the lake ; but Gergesa was " a little town nearly opposite Capernaum, the ruined site of which is still called *Kerza* or *Gersa*. Origen tells us that the exact site of the miracle was here pointed out in his day." — *Cambridge Bible.*

Arrived there, Christ was met at once by a pitiable sufferer, one of the most desperate cases he ever confronted. Matt. 8 : 28 tells us that there were *two* of these unfortunates, but one of them was evidently the more conspicuous, and he alone is mentioned by Mark and in Luke 8 : 27. " This poor wretch, being possessed with a legion of evil spirits, had been driven to something worse than madness. He fixed his home among the tombs, where he dwelt by night and day, and was the terror of all those who passed by. The authorities had attempted to curb him ; he had been bound with fetters and chains, but in the paroxysms of his madness he had torn the chains in sunder, and broken the fetters in pieces. Attempts had been made to

MARK 5 : 15. And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with demons sitting, clothed and in his right mind, *even* him that had the legion : and they were afraid.

16. And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with demons, and concerning the swine.

reclaim him, but no man could tame him. He was worse than the wild beasts, for they might be tamed ; but his fierce nature would not yield. He was a misery to himself, for he would run upon the mountains by night and day, cutting himself with the sharp flints, and torturing his poor body in the most frightful manner." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

THE APPEAL OF THE DEMONS. The poor demoniac, as soon as he saw Jesus in the distance, rushed at him as if to attack him ; but, moved instinctively by the love and majesty in our Lord's face and bearing, he fell at his feet and worshipped him. Then ensued this dialogue:

Jesus : " Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man."

The Demoniac (shouting wildly) : " What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God ? I adjure thee by God, torment me not."

Jesus : " What is thy name ?"

The Demoniac : " My name is Legion : for we are many. We pray thee, do not send us out of this country. Send us into yonder herd of swine."

Jesus : " Be it as you will."

THE DEMONS IN THE SWINE. There was a great herd of about two thousand swine feeding on the mountain from which the demoniac had run down. At once the demons left their victim, entered into the swine, and drove them pell-mell down the steep slope and over a cliff into the sea, where they were drowned. In terror and dismay the swineherds fled to the nearby city and the country around it, and told what had happened. We can almost hear their excited voices over the centuries. This marvellous story soon brought a crowd to the scene of the miracle.

Why did Jesus permit the destruction of the swine ? Some have pointed out that Jews were forbidden by the law to keep swine, as they were forbidden to eat their flesh. Also Trench argues that " if this granting of the evil spirit's request helped in any way the cure of the man, this would have been motive enough. Or, still more probably, it may have been necessary for the permanent healing of the man that he should have an outward evidence and testimony that the hellish powers which held him in bondage had quitted their hold."

CLOTHED AND IN HIS RIGHT MIND. 15. And they come to Jesus, and behold him that was possessed with demons. What a change they saw in him ! The features were the same, but no longer distorted. The eyes were the same, but in them burned no longer the baleful fires of delirium. His form was unchanged, but no longer racked with convulsive twitchings. It was his voice, but speaking in quiet tones and uttering reasonable words. It was a wonder that even his relatives and friends recognized him. Sitting, clothed and in his right mind, *even* him that had the legion. Insanity often takes the form of a passion for nakedness, and " clothed " and " in his right mind " belong together. Missionaries dealing with savage tribes have long ago discovered the close connection between proper clothing and righteous living. Even in Christian lands it sometimes becomes necessary in the interest of public morality to protest against immodest attire. And they were afraid. Here again was proof that some supernatural power had been at work, and they trembled where they should have rejoiced.

16. And they that saw it declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with demons, and concerning the swine. The story was so strange that it would



Gergesenes,

Traditional Hill of the Swine.

17. And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders.

18. And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons besought him that he might be with him.

19. And he suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and *how* he had mercy on thee.

not have been believed except on the testimony of eye-witnesses. As to all of Christ's miracles it is impossible to reckon up how many eye-witnesses must have been scattered about Palestine, and all of them were potential missionaries for the Christian faith.

"DEPART FROM US." "LET ME BE WITH THEE." 17. **And they began to beseech him to depart from their borders.** Not so much because he had healed the demoniac, but because through his marvellous powers the swine had been lost, and they feared further loss by the same means. Touch a man's purse and the whole man is usually moved.

18. **And as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons besought him that he might be with him.** Perhaps the cured man was afraid that the demons would return to him if he did not remain with the Healer; certainly his gratitude led him to desire to attach himself to his Benefactor, and he would wish to see more of the great Teacher and learn of him. Worldly selfishness bade Jesus depart, humble gratitude longs to continue with him.

"TELL YOUR FRIENDS." 19. **And he suffered him not.** "In that profane Greek land beyond the lake, the country of the amorous poet Meleager and the Epicurean Philodemus, the presence of a saved man might be the witness of salvation. He was to remain and publish it abroad, and in the gratitude of his heart he did as the Saviour commanded him." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.* **But saith unto him, Go to thy house unto thy friends.** Do not go with me among the strangers in Galilee but stay where you know and are known, and where your testimony will be most readily believed. **And tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.** Heretofore Christ had bidden those whom he healed to keep silent concerning it, but that was in the part of Palestine where Christ's enemies swarmed, where he intended to continue working, and where the people were ready to take him for a leader and rise against the Romans. In the country east of the lake there were none of these reasons for secrecy as to Christ's miracles, and, moreover, this cured man was the only agent for evangelizing the region. **And how he had mercy on thee.** This is the pay that God asks for the forgiveness of our sins and for the salvation which Christ obtained for us by his infinite sacrifice. How contemptible are we if in return for this mercy we will not even tell others about it! We should be eager to proclaim it to every one and wherever we go. "Often it demands more tact and delicacy to put the saving truth before husband, wife, or children, than it does to set forth the same truth to a multitude." — *William L. Watkinson.* "If one is not faithful in an insignificant sphere he will not be faithful in a resounding sphere." — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

The healed demoniac obeyed Jesus. He went all over Decapolis ("Ten Cities"), the region east and southeast of the Sea of Galilee. His was a simple but a glorious theme, he "told how great things Jesus had done for him," and he told it with such loving power that "all men marvelled."

CHRIST DRIVING OUT DEVILS. "Christ came to destroy the works of the devil and he alone can do it. To a friend who was urging the excellent tendency of certain benevolent schemes, Coleridge replied, as he cast a bit of thistle-down into the air, 'The tendency of this is toward China; but we know it will never get there. So is it with every other plan of complete and ultimate reformation, except that which is contained in the gospel of Christ.' As John B. Gough was reeling through the streets of Newburyport a humble cobbler, noting the desperate strait of the poor drunkard, laid a hand upon his shoulder and said kindly, pointing upward, 'John, there is One that can help thee.' That marked the turning-point of his life. He gave up every other reliance and threw himself upon the omnipotent help of God." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

The man in the tombs was "a terror to the neighborhood, wounded, naked, stripped, ostracized, alienated, lonely, suffering, sad, possessed by the devil. And this is but a sample case of what the devil would do with every man if he had his way." — *Gipsy Smith.*

"God may be calling you now, and, like the people of Gadara, you may be asking him to depart. It will take but a little effort, and he will go away from you. Pleasure, and gayety, and business, and making money — there are ten thousand ways of bidding him depart. But do you desire to lose him?" — *Rev. James de Koven, D.D.*

"I know many who are possessed by the devil now. Well, if we will go to Jesus in our trouble, he will heal us, will cast out the devil of drunkenness, or lust, or bad temper, or selfishness." — *Rev. H. J. Wilmot Buxton.*

"Legion was my name by nature,
Satan raged within my breast;
Never misery was greater,
Never sinner more possessed:
Mischievous to all around me,
To myself the greatest foe;
Thus I was when Jesus found me,
Filled with madness, sin, and woe.

"Yet in this forlorn condition,
When he came to set me free,
I replied to my Physician,
'What have I to do with thee?'

But he would not be prevented,
Rescued me against my will;
Had he stayed till I consented,
I had been a captive still.

* * * * *
"Love," he said, "will sweeten labors,
Thou hast something yet to do;
Go and tell your friends and neighbors
What my love has done for you:
Live to manifest my glory,
Wait for heaven a little space;
Sinners, when they hear thy story,
Will repent, and seek my face."

— *John Newton in "Olney Hymns."*

LESSON IX. — February 26.

OTHER MIGHTY WORKS OF JESUS. — Mark 5 : 22-43.

PRINT vs. 22-27, 32-36, 41, 42.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* — MARK 5 : 34.

Devotional Reading : Eph. 3 : 14-21.

Primary Topic : JESUS SHOWS HIS MIGHTY POWER.

Lesson Material : Mark 5 : 21-24, 35, 38-42.

Memory Verse : Fear not, only believe. Mark 5 : 36.

Junior Topic : JESUS SHOWS HIS MIGHTY POWER.

Lesson Material : Mark 5 : 21-24, 35, 38-42.

Memory Verse : Mark 5 : 36.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS THE GIVER AND PRESERVER OF LIFE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE WORKS OF FAITH.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be deeply interested in the poor sick woman who touched the hem of Christ's robe in the crowd, and especially in the story of the sick little girl who died and was brought back to life by Jesus. Tell the story in such a way as to bring out Christ's loving nature, and make the boys and girls feel that he is just the one to whom they can take all their troubles.

The Older Classes will discuss, in connection with the first miracle, the nature of faith and what it accomplishes, especially the work of faith in the healing of physical and spiritual disease. In connection with the second miracle the class will discuss the proofs of immortality in relation to Christ, and the facts in regard to death and Christ as Victor over death.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What should the church be doing for the conquest of disease and the prolongation of life ?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus the Giver and Preserver of Life.

I. JESUS HEALS THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED HIS GARMENTS, vs. 22-34.

The prayer of Jairus.
A suffering woman.
The touch of faith.
The victories of faith.

II. JESUS RAISES FROM THE DEAD THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS, vs. 35-43.

"Fear not, only believe."
"The child sleepeth."
"Damsel, arise."
Jesus the Lord of Life.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Macmillan's *Our Lord's Three Raisings from the Dead*. Gipsy Smith's *As Jesus Passed By*. Hugh Black's *"According to My Gospel."* Edgar DeWitt Jones's *The Inner Circle*. Morrison's *The Weaving of Glory*. Lightfoot's *Sermons*. Robertson's *Sermons*. Fifth Series. Trench's *Westminster Sermons*. Stanley's *Sermons for Children*. Murray's *Why Do You Not Believe?* Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*. McNeill's

Sermons, Vol. 2. Maclaren's Expositions. Brand's Sermons from a College Pulpit.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn of A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — Capernaum.

Christ's wayside ministries.
Rulers of the synagogue in the New Testament.
Christ's love of children.
Christ's emphasis on faith.
Christ's resurrection miracles compared.
The Aramaic language in the Bible.

22. And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jâ-i'-rûs by name; and seeing him, he falleth at his feet,

23. And beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: *I pray thee*, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live.

24. And he went with him; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.

I. JESUS HEALS THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED HIS GARMENT, vs. 22-34.

The Saviour, when on earth, was rich in healing mercy. Giving did not impoverish him. His power was exhaustless. In our lesson we see one miracle following close on the heels of another, and the second was the far greater work, if we can so speak of the activities of Omnipotence. As we study this lesson we should gain from it more confidence in the Redeemer's readiness to help and his majestic and limitless power.

THE PRAYER OF JAIRUS. 22. **And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name.** Our Lord had just returned from the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, where he had driven the legion of demons out of the body of the demoniac into the herd of swine. He was again on the western shore, near Capernaum, and as always he was thronged with people eager for healing for themselves and their loved ones, or curious to witness one of his famous miracles. In this crowd was a notable man. His name, Jairus, is given in the account, and we seldom learn the names of those for whom Christ worked his miracles. Several persons named Jair are mentioned in the Old Testament, including one of the Judges; "Jairus" is derived from that ancient name. This man may have become a disciple of Jesus; it would have been strange if he did not. The synagogue rulers presided over the elders of the synagogue, and superintended the synagogue services, having among other duties that of appointing the speaker of the day or reader of the Bible passages. As the plural is used here, we may conclude that sometimes a synagogue had several of these officers, perhaps as we have a president and a vice-president of our organizations. This was the synagogue built for the Jews by the noble centurion of Capernaum, and when his servant was sick and he wanted Jesus to heal him (Luke 7 : 3), this synagogue ruler was probably among the elders who were sent to intercede for him. **And seeing him, he falleth at his feet.** If he was so closely associated with the former miracle, worked for the centurion, he was ready, important man as he was, to fall at the feet of the carpenter's Son, well knowing the divine power that rested in him.

23. **And beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death.** She was his only daughter, as we learn from Luke 8 : 42, and his use of the affectionate term, "little," indicates how dear she was to him. It was the despairing wail of a heart-broken father, and went straight to the heart of the loving Saviour. *I pray thee*, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live. To any affectionate soul the imminent peril of some loved one is far more grievous than any loss or pain that might threaten himself. How gladly would a father or mother die for a child! If this father had known of the healing of the centurion's servant by the thought of Christ sent from a distance, he showed less faith than that heathen Roman when he asked the Lord to go and lay his hands on the dying girl, that the healing influence might pass from him into her wasted form.

24. **And he went with him; and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.** At once Jesus left the seashore, where he had been teaching, and followed the ruler of the synagogue, his disciples accompanying him (Matt. 9 : 19), and a large crowd going with him to see what he could do with a case so very desperate.

25. **And a woman, who had an issue of blood twelve years.** "Her malady had lasted as long as the other sufferer now soliciting the compassion of Jesus had lived. The length of time points perhaps to the hemorrhage being of a periodical kind.

25. And a woman, who had an issue of blood twelve years,
 26. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,
 27. Having heard the things concerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment.

Maladies of this kind were regarded as peculiarly afflictive ; ceremonial uncleanness attached to them (Lev. 15 : 19). — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond.*

26. **And had suffered many things of many physicians.** We know some of the foolish remedies prescribed for this malady by Jewish physicians, such as a mixture of Alexandrian gum with alum and crocus ; or onions boiled in wine ; or to dig seven ditches ; or to burn vine-cuttings ; or to sit over one ditch and then over another ; or to sit with a cup of wine in her right hand at a crossroads while some one comes up from behind and frightens her ! **And had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.** Those who are fond of criticising the physicians and surgeons of to-day should study the art of healing as practised in ancient times, and to-day by the doctors of heathen lands. The old-time physicians not only prescribed absurd remedies which could not by any possibility cure disease, but they made their patients pay heavily for complicated medicines often made up of materials from distant lands which were very expensive. A poor woman in a desperate illness might easily spend on the quacks of the day all the money she had.

27. **Having heard the things concerning Jesus.** She was evidently not a woman of Capernaum, where so many of Christ's miracles had been worked, but from some distant place to which the rumors of those blessed marvels of healing had penetrated. But her faith, built only on hearsay, was strong enough to carry her weakened body over the long miles. She was sure that Jesus could cure, and she knew that his help

was free. She had found, after many trials, the Great Physician. **Came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment.**

"There was a moral significance in the hem of a Jew's garment. According to the Mosaic law, it required to be bound with a ribbon of blue as a memorial of God's goodness to Israel, and a reminder of the debt of gratitude which they owed him. Like all ordinances addressed to the senses, this custom, however, failed in the course of ages to fulfil its wise purpose ; for the Pharisees enlarged the blue ribbon, and made broad their phylacteries, in order that they might receive praise from men for their scrupulous adherence to the mere letter of the law. Our Saviour himself in all likelihood wore this significant blue fringe on the border of his woven and seamless coat ; for every command of the law was sacred to him, and, in speaking of the custom of his nation, it was the abuse and not the use that he condemned. It is possible that the woman of Capernaum may have been prompted to touch the hem of Christ's garment, not merely because that was the part of it which lay nearest to her, and which she could most easily reach, but also because she attributed a peculiar virtue to it from its sacred associations." — *Rev. Hugh Macmillan, F.R.S.E.*



Bida.

A Woman Healed by Touching the Garment of Jesus.

The woman was superstitious to this extent, that she felt that she must touch Jesus, to draw his healing power from him ; but that was a superstition of the times, and

32. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Jesus recognized her faith in spite of it. At the touch, indeed, the woman at once felt such a thrill of fresh life and strength pervading her worn frame that she instantly knew herself to be cured completely. Also at the touch our Lord felt that healing power had passed from him, and evidently it was not without conscious exertion and loss of vitality that he accomplished his miracles. It was far more than a mere thought or word with him ; it cost him something, it cost him much. " Who touched me ? " he asked, to the amusement of his disciples. " Here is all this crowd pressing upon you," they said, " and do you ask, ' Who touched me ? ' " They may have looked at one another in alarm. Was the Master growing insane ?

32. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. The Greek implies a searching glance, examining the members of the crowd one after the other.

33. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her. She was afraid of Christ's rebuke, for she was ceremonially unclean, and her touch would have made Christ " unclean " until the evening. Also she feared because she had, as it were, committed theft upon Christ's store of healing power, and how did she know but he intended it for another ? Perhaps she had made it impossible for him to restore the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue ! It is hard for human beings, limited as they are, to comprehend the illimitable supply of Omnipotence. **Came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.** Her disease was regarded as disgraceful and as an evidence of sin, yet she told all about it before all the people (Luke 8 : 47), with, we may be sure, a great burst of praise and thanksgiving for her cure. She was a genuine Christian witness-bearer.

34. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. She is the only woman so far as is recorded, whom Christ addressed by the kindly term, " Daughter." Faith always drew from him some warm expression of approval. He was even ready and glad to transfer to her faith the credit for the miracle which he himself had accomplished, so eager is he always to encourage faith in human hearts. We may be sure that, whatever disease may have torn our spirits and shattered our lives, faith in Christ will avail to make us whole. **Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.** More literally, " Go into peace," for peace was from that time to be the country in which she was to dwell, she whose life had been one long distress for twelve years. Tradition has been busy with this notable woman. We are told that she was Veronica, the woman of Jerusalem who passed to Christ a handkerchief as he was toiling beneath the cross on his way to Calvary, and he, wiping his face therewith, impressed his portrait upon it. She is said to have been a native of Cæsarea Philippi, where her house was shown. At its gates on a stone pedestal was a bronze image of the woman stretching out her arms in entreaty toward another figure representing Christ.

THE VICTORIES OF FAITH. The victories of faith require the touch of faith. No one can keep aloof from Jesus in spirit and receive his healing and his strength and peace. " There is a tremendous difference between thronging Jesus and touching Jesus. There were six hundred thousand people left Egypt for the promised land who never reached it. Two men out of the crowd reached it. They were touchers, the others were throngers." — *Gipsy Smith*.

" Faith is wanting, faith, which is the divine hunger of the soul, the emptiness of the soul longing to be filled, and believing that it will be filled, out of God's fulness ; and because this is so, therefore there goes no virtue from him to us ; it is never given to us so to touch him as that immediately we know in ourselves that we are whole of our plague." — *Archbishop Trench*.

" The sick woman regarded Jesus as so filled with the divine power of life. She should fear whether it were indeed open to her to take a draught of water from a rushing river sooner than cherish the thought that there was no health for her to be found with Jesus." — *Andrew Murray*.

" The imperfections of this woman's faith were many. It was intensely ignorant trust. But the power and vitality of faith are not measured by the comprehensions and clearness of belief. The richest soil may bear shrunk and barren ears ; and

35. While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Teacher any further?

36. But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe.

on the arid sand, with the thinnest layer of earth, gorgeous cacti may bloom out, and fleshy aloes lift their sworded arms, with stores of moisture to help them through the heat. It is not for us to say what amount of ignorance is destructive of the possibility of real confidence in Jesus Christ." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

"As the woman came she was saying within herself, 'If I but touch his clothes, I shall be made whole.' Thus she came hopefully, she came encouraging herself. Now, my friend, I wish you would help yourself; I wish you would come to the gospel as you have never come before. Pluck up heart of grace. Come with a bright look in the face, not a blank, dull, unexpectant eye. Like the woman, say 'I believe I shall be saved.' Have the very widest expectations in and from Jesus, and they will never be falsified; they will be fulfilled." — *Rev. John McNeill, D.D.*

"Fear not, then, distressed believer,
Venture on his mighty name;
He is able to deliver,
And his love is still the same:

Can his pity or his power
Suffer thee to pray in vain?
Wait but his appointed hour,
And thy suit thou shalt obtain."
— *John Newton's "Olney Hymn" on this miracle.*

II. JESUS RAISES FROM THE DEAD THE DAUGHTER OF JAÏRUS, vs. 35-43. George Macdonald opens his chapter on this miracle thus: "I linger on the threshold. How shall I enter the temple of this wonder?"

35. While he yet spake, they come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead. We may imagine the impatience of the synagogue ruler at this interruption. His daughter was dying when he set out to get Jesus. Every minute was precious, and here was all this time lost in healing a woman whose case had lasted twelve years and might well have waited an hour longer — healing her and listening to her explanations. And now to hear from home that it is too late! Surely if ever a man's faith was tried, it was the faith of this poor father. Why troublest thou the Teacher any further? The messengers, and apparently the father, had no idea the Christ could raise the dead. So far as is recorded, our Lord had up to this time worked only one resurrection miracle, and that was at Nain (Luke 7: 11-17), at a considerable distance from Capernaum, as distance was in those days.

36. But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe. Do not fear even death; believe so strongly on me that you can rise above even this terrible crisis on the wings of your faith. Belief on Christ can conquer fear, and nothing else can.

Jesus saw that the time had come to separate the distracted father from the crowd, in order that his faith might not fail because of their condolences. Very likely the Eastern death wail had begun to be raised at the reception of the sad news. Jesus would not even allow all of the Twelve to follow, only Peter and James and John, whose faith he was sure would strengthen and uphold that of the ruler of the synagogue.

Christ's special choice of Peter, James, and John was repeated on two other remarkable occasions, the transfiguration and the agony in Gethsemane. Why did he single out those three? Surely not from favoritism, any more than his selection of the Twelve was based upon that. Christ was a man and felt the need of friendships, and, among his friends, of special friendships; but the reason lay deeper than that. "Christ's purpose was not to confer favor on these men, but to train them for a great work. The favor they received carried with it a burden. That is to say, it is not selection to privilege but to service." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.* James became the first martyr of the apostolic band. Peter was the leader of the apostles and died on the cross. John became bishop of Ephesus, wrote the greatest of the Gospels, and lived nearly a century. Christ singled out the three because their character and ability had singled them out for remarkable usefulness in the Kingdom.

"The very first place to which Jesus took these three friends was the house of mourning; the next place was the mountain of prayer; the third place was the garden of grief." — *Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones, D.D.* The intimates of Jesus will accompany him often to all three places.

41. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi ; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.

42. And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked ; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement.

"As soon as death takes place in a Palestinian home the female members of the household and the professional mourning-women announce it to the neighborhood by setting up their shrill and piercing cry — called the *tahlil* — which is heard at a great distance and above every other noise, even the din of battle, and is quite characteristic of the East." —

Van Lennep. As Jesus with the ruler of the synagogue approached the house these doleful sounds rent the air, and Matt. 9 : 23 makes mention also of the shrill wailing of flutes. The Saviour had no sympathy with such violent tokens of grief, and rebuked the mourners : "Why make ye a tumult, and weep ? the child is not dead, but sleepeth."

Our Lord's most usual term for physical death was sleep ; he reserved "death" and "dead" for that awful thing, the death of the soul, for sin. "The



Oriental Mourners.

maiden is not dead, but sleepeth ; but — this my son was dead, and is alive again. The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth ; but — let the dead bury their dead. The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth ; but — he who believeth upon me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Christ did not find the dead in Jairus's house, nor in any sepulchre among the Galilean hills. He saw the dead where men and women were — in the synagogue and in the market and the home." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

We read that "they laughed him to scorn" when our Lord declared that the little girl was only sleeping. They were familiar with sleep as a gentle term for death, but they knew that Christ was not speaking in a metaphor, and they knew also that the child was really dead. Lest they shatter the father's faith, Jesus put all the wailers out of the house, and went into the death chamber taking with him only the girl's father and mother and the three chosen disciples.

41. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, Talitha cumi ; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise. It is clear that Jesus usually spoke in Aramaic, the ordinary language of Palestine, and that Peter, remembering Christ's exact words, told them to Mark. Thus also it is Mark who records the Aramaic word spoken by Christ in opening the ears of the deaf man, Ephphatha (Mark 7 : 34). Aramaic is a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew, originating in Mesopotamia. "Wake up, little girl !" is the English equivalent of what Christ said. He took her by the hand more as an instinctive movement of love than because it was a necessity for the miracle, for only a word was enough in the cases of Lazarus and the young man of Nain.

42. And straightway the damsel rose up, and walked ; for she was twelve years old. She walked at once, there was nothing of the weakness which follows so severe a sickness. The mention of her age is to account for her walking : she was not too young for that. Compare the marvellous ease of Christ in working this miracle with the strenuous labor of Elijah and of Elisha in working their resurrection miracles : 1 Kings 17 : 17-22 ; 2 Kings 4 : 32-35. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement. The mother and father, primarily, and even the disciples, accustomed to marvels as they were. Moffatt translates it well, "They were lost in utter amazement."

Christ laid strict injunctions on all witnesses of the miracle not to spread the news abroad. "That the girl had recovered could not be hid, but that she had been brought back from death might be. Jesus wished this, not desiring that expectations of such acts should be awakened." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*.

The close of the account is a beautiful, homely touch, Christ's bidding that food should be brought to the little girl. "He was a loving man, genial in his feelings, full of human sympathies, fond of young folks. He would enter at once into the circle of the little damsel's self-consciousness, and understand how sweet to her young fresh appetite, after the long abstinence to which she had been subjected in her illness, would be 'something to eat.' Even the child's mother was not so motherly as Jesus." — *James Morison*.



Raising of Jairus's Daughter.

A. Keller.

JESUS THE LORD OF LIFE. "This is one of three signal miracles, the anticipations of Christ's own resurrection. Christ's miracles have always the highest spiritual significance. They are not miracles only, but parables also." — *Bishop J. B. Lightfoot*. This, the first of Christ's resurrection miracles, announces him as the Lord of life — life of the body, and still more wonderfully life of the soul.

"Jesus is the Lord of disease. Some day there will be no disease; some day there will be no raging epidemic; some day there will be no fever; some day there will be perfect health, robust, round, full-orbed, strong health. We shall be like him — and he is healthy enough — for we shall see him as he is. And in proportion as we get like him here disease will disappear, for Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil." — *Gipsy Smith*.

"It is not mere life on which Christianity has shed a richer value. It is by ennobling the purpose to which life is to be dedicated that it has made life more precious." — *F. W. Robertson*.

"Christ bade the father still keep up his heart. 'Fear not,' he said, 'only believe.' 'Fear not,' he says to all anxious mourners. 'Fear not the dark and dreary void into which thy loved one has passed. Fear not that God will desert thee in thine hour of need. Fear not but that thou wilt once more see the child, the parent, the brother, the sister, thou hast lost. Only believe in the lovingkindness of God our Saviour. Only believe that he who makes the flowers to spring and the buds to come forth again, will raise that little flower, will help that bursting blossom of the human soul.'" — *Dean Stanley*.

"Christ comes to your heart and cries, 'Talitha cumi,' 'Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.' Arise to what? you ask. What is this life to which he calls me? It is a great and divine life of service, out of which shall grow everything that is worth possessing or worth giving away." — *Rev. James Brand*.

LESSON X. — March 4.

JESUS AND THE TWELVE. — Mark I: 16-20; 2: 13, 14; 3: 13-19; 6: 7-13, 30.

PRINT Mark 3: 13-15; 6: 7-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.* — MARK 16: 15.

Devotional Reading : Rom. 12 : 1-8.

Primary Topic : JESUS CHOOSES TWELVE HELPERS.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 13-15 ; 6 : 7.

Memory Verse : And he appointed twelve that they might be with him.
Mark 3 : 14.

Junior Topic : THE TWELVE APOSTLES AND THEIR WORK.

Lesson Material : Mark 3 : 13-15 ; 6 : 7-13.

Memory Verse : And he chose from them twelve, whom he named Apostles.
Luke 6 : 13.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS' CALL TO SERVICE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : The Training of the Twelve.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes are likely to know the list of the twelve apostles, and this is a good time to make their various personalities stand out, so far as the New Testament tells about them. The main teaching of the lesson is that Christ calls each boy and girl as truly as he called the Twelve, and that there is a place for each of them in his service.

The Older Classes will discuss in connection with this lesson the great question of the consecration of life to Christ. There are not enough ministers of the gospel, missionaries, evangelists, Sunday-school teachers, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, etc. Who should take up such work? If any are unfit for it, to what kinds of work may Christ call them? Invite to the discussion several persons who are engaged in different sorts of Christian life work.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What is the cause of the shortage in full-time Christian workers, and how can the shortage be remedied?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hugh Black's *Listening to God*. J. D. Jones's *The Gospel According to St. Mark 1-6:6*. Charles R. Brown's *Those Twelve*. Clausen's *Pen-Portraits of the Twelve*. Schaeffer's *The Call to Prophetic Service* (one of the very best helps on this lesson). Gillie's *The Kinsfolk and Friends of Jesus*. Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord*. Vance's *The College of Apostles*. Jones's *The Glorious Company of the Apostles*. Willlett's *The Call of the Christ*. Rowland and Greenhough

in *Men of the New Testament*. Cumming's *He Chose Twelve*. Stirling's *Finders of the Way*.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The calling of the Twelve, in the midsummer of A.D. 28, in the second year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — The Horns of Hattin, a prominent hill west of the Sea of Galilee.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The number twelve throughout the Bible.

Contrasted characters of the Twelve.

The four best-known apostles: Peter, James, John, Judas.

The four less-known apostles: Matthew, Thomas, Andrew, Philip.

The four least-known apostles: James the Less, Jude, Bartholomew, Simon Zelotes.

Modern apostles.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Twelve Helpers of Jesus.

I. THE CALLING OF THE TWELVE, Mark 1 : 16-20 ; 2 : 13, 14 ; 3 : 13-19.

Four fishers called.

A tax-collector called.

The Twelve completed.

Christ needs many kinds of helpers.

II. THE WORK OF THE TWELVE, Mark 6 : 7-13, 30.

Two and two.

An adventure of faith.

Preaching and healing.

Returning and reporting.

The work of Christ's helpers to-day.

I. THE CALLING OF THE TWELVE, Mark 1 : 16-20 ; 2 : 13, 14 ; 3 : 13-19. FOUR FISHERS CALLED (Mark 1 : 16-20). Simon and his brother Andrew were two hardy fishers of Capernaum. They already had much knowledge of Jesus, for they had been with him in Judæa hearing John the Baptist preach, had heard the Baptist's testimony to him as the Messiah, and had witnessed some of Christ's miracles. The same is true of James and his brother John, who also were fishers of Capernaum. Therefore when the Saviour bade them follow him and become fishers of men instead of fish, they were ready to leave their calling, their goods, their homes and dear ones, and go along with Jesus in his great work of bringing men to God. "These men followed Christ because they had already discovered that he was worth following. All the centuries combine to assert that Christ is worthy. The multitude of the redeemed in heaven sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!' Peter and James and John and Andrew never repented their obedience to Christ's call.

Though it entailed upon them a hard life and a bloody death, that is the word they cry to us — 'He is worthy!' — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

Andrew was the Bringer. He brought to Christ his brother Peter, and the lad with the lunch, and the party of Greeks. He was the discovering apostle, and so was one of the most useful of the Twelve, though one of the quietest. "Most Christians feel that St. Paul and St. Peter are above their reach in heroic proportions and the vastness of their works, but men like Andrew are the one-talented men who use their one talent sweetly and nobly, and show us all the way we ought to go and the work which we can do." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

Simon, the headstrong disciple, was called "the Rock" by Christ, and on the strong foundation of his bold and complete proclamation of Jesus as the Son of God our Lord said he would build his church. Yet this same Simon the Rock was also called "Satan" by Christ, and denied his Redeemer in the time of his trial. This leader of the Twelve is an illustration of what Christ can do with faulty men whose hearts are right.

James and John were called by Jesus, on account of their impetuosity, "Boanerges" or "sons of thunder" (Mark 3 : 17). They wanted Christ to bring down fire from heaven on the Samaritan village that would not receive him (Luke 9 : 53-56). Possibly because of this violent spirit James was the first of the disciples to suffer a martyr's death, the only one whose death is recorded in the Old Testament. John, on the contrary, outlived all the other disciples, and was at this time hardly more than a boy. But he was a very wonderful boy, and was distinguished above the other eleven as the disciple whom Jesus especially loved.

A TAX-COLLECTOR CALLED (Mark 2 : 13, 14). "Matthew was a publican, that is to say a tax-collector. The Master showed courage in making such a choice. The tax-collector in any country is not likely to be as popular as Santa Claus. But in Palestine, where the taxes were farmed out by the Roman government, the tax-collector, socially speaking, was a leper. He stood about where gamblers and bootleggers stand with us. Some man would pay the Roman government a fixed sum for the right to collect taxes in a given district. Then he took all he could get. He had but one rule, 'Pile on all the traffic will bear.' These tax-collectors were regarded by all upright Jews as traitors to their country. Their money was 'tainted money,' and was not to be accepted in the synagogue. They were not regarded as being capable of taking an oath — their testimony was refused in the courts. But the Master did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. One Saturday a young minister inserted in the town paper, and mailed to pretty much everybody in the place, a notice which read like this :

'SINNERS' SERVICE.

The service at the — Church next Sunday will be exclusively for sinners. The saints are all asked to stay away.'

The church, of course, was packed to the doors the following Sunday, and then that young minister tried to tell the people who Jesus Christ was, and what he was trying to do for the world, and how much he needed the help of those very



Christ and the Fishermen.

Zimmermann.

MARK 3 : 13. And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him.

14. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15. And to have authority to cast out demons :

people who were there that morning, many of them for the first time." — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

THE TWELVE COMPLETED (Mark 3 : 13-19). 13. **And he goeth up into the mountain.** Kurn Hattin or Horns of Hattin, the only conspicuous hill on the western

side of the Sea of Galilee, the place where the Sermon on the Mount was preached. Here Christ spent the entire night in prayer (Luke 6 : 12), for the following day was to be full of momentous occurrences. The Son of Man felt the need of strength and wisdom from his Father; and if he relied on prayer, how much more should we! **And calleth unto him whom he himself would.** Many disciples were present (Luke 6 : 13) for Christ's preaching and miracles had drawn large numbers to follow him. From this assembly, acting with knowledge supplied him from above, our Lord chose his assistants. Thus guided, he made no mistake. **And they went unto him.** They freely and gladly accepted the call. Doubtless during the delivery of the wonderful Sermon on the Mount that followed, they made an inner circle around the Master.



Calling of Matthew.

Bida.

14. **And he appointed twelve.** Twelve, probably, because of the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from the twelve sons of Jacob. In honor of them the numeral twelve has a high place in Bible history, but this use of it is the crown. For Christ's purpose, twelve was an ideal company, large enough to cover the country with evangelists, not too large to be easily taught and readily housed. **That they might be with him.** Our Lord exemplified all the social virtues. He loved companionship. No one ever lived who was so capable of carrying a great work by himself, but he would not carry it by himself. He had a wise eye to the future, and trained up many workers to perpetuate his work. Most of all, he wanted many helpers because he loved men and would not be solitary. No selfish recluse can accomplish much for the kingdom of God. **And that he might send them forth to preach.** Thus he called them "apostles" (Luke 6 : 13), which means "men sent forth." No true Christian abides at home forever with Christ, because Christ himself is ever going forth over the world in the work of extending his kingdom. And every Christian is to be a preacher in the sense in which these apostles were usually preachers; for we are not to think of them as often delivering formal discourses, but rather as holding earnest conversation about the true life with those whom they met from day to day. By doing this they became fully able to hold and win large assemblies when the time came for preaching in that sense.

15. **And to have authority to cast out demons.** Matt. 10 : 1 records the additional authority to heal all manner of disease. The demoniacs here stand for all the afflicted, being in the worst state of all. The power of working miracles, necessary in the early days of Christianity in order to authenticate Christ's immediate successors, was gradually withdrawn as not needed for that purpose.

Mark then gives a list of the twelve disciples, five of whom have already been described, namely : (1) Simon Peter (Cephas) and (2) his brother Andrew, both fishers ; (3) James and (4) his brother John, also fishers ; and (5) Matthew (Levi), the publican. The remaining seven were : (6) James the Less or Younger and (7) his brother Jude (Thaddæus Lebbaeus) ; (8) Philip of Bethsaida ; (9) Bartholo-

mew (Nathanael) of Cana ; (10) Thomas (Didymus) ; (11) Simon the Cananæan or Zelotes ; and (12) Judas Iscariot or Judas of Kerieth in Judæa, the only one of the Twelve who was not a Galilean.

WHERE THE TWELVE LABORED. Peter was a missionary among the Jews as far as Babylon and in Rome. James the Elder preached in Jerusalem and Judæa. John worked among the churches of Asia Minor and especially in Ephesus. James the Less preached in Palestine and Egypt. The Syrian Christians claim Thomas as the founder of their church and he may also have preached in Persia and India. Philip preached in Phrygia. It is the tradition that Andrew preached in Scythia, Greece, and Asia Minor and that Jude preached in Assyria and Persia. Concerning the work of the others nothing is reported.

WRITINGS OF THE TWELVE. Peter wrote two Epistles and probably helped Mark write his Gospel. John wrote the Fourth Gospel, three Epistles, and the Revelation. James the Less, according to some scholars (but this is not likely) wrote the Epistle of James. Jude wrote an Epistle. Matthew wrote the First Gospel.

HOW THE TWELVE DIED. It is the *tradition* (1) that Peter was crucified at Rome (head downward at his own request, regarding it as too honorable for him to be crucified in the same position as Christ) ; (2) that Andrew was crucified on "St. Andrew's cross" — an X ; (3) that John was banished to Patmos, recalled, and died a natural death nearly a hundred years old ; (4) that James the younger was crucified in Egypt or thrown from a pinnacle ; (5) that Jude was martyred in Persia ; (6) that Philip was martyred in Hierapolis in Phrygia ; (7) that Bartholomew was flayed to death ; (8) that Matthew was martyred in Ethiopia ; (9) that Thomas died a martyr, being shot by a shower of arrows while at prayer ; and (10) that Simon Zelotes was crucified. It is known (11) that Judas committed suicide and that (12) James the Elder was beheaded by Herod, A.D. 44, at Jerusalem, the first martyr among the Twelve.

CHRIST NEEDS MANY KINDS OF HELPERS. "Our Lord's thought was that all his followers should begin as disciples, and pass on as the Twelve did to the higher stage of apostleship — that is, that in their own degree they should all first learn of him, yield to his transforming touch, and then bear their witness." — *Rev. J. G. Greenough*.

"Philip was rather a slow-moving man, laborious and heavy-footed in mind. When Jesus asked him how the multitude was to be fed, he went through a calculation as if he had been ordered to buy bread for them all ; and when the Greek strangers wished to see Jesus, he was so cautious that he could not bring himself to grant their request until he had consulted Andrew. Philip was slow to think and slow to act, but he was honest and true. He knew the King of men when he saw him. He was a good helper because such a good witness. People might say what they pleased about Nazareth ; he had seen Jesus for himself, and he knew him to be the Messiah. It is largely through men like Philip that the religion of Jesus has become the greatest religion in the world." — *R. C. Gillie*.

Nathanael Bartholomew comes down in history with the high honor of Christ's praise : he was "an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile." He knew his Bible well, and so was quick to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. Besides that, we know nothing about him. "Good and faithful servant though he doubtless was, he is little more than a name in the church's history. Yet he was a beloved friend of Jesus Christ, who commended him for the simplicity and gentleness of his character. This should be an encouragement to those of us who are not endowed with exceptional gifts and have no opportunities for brilliant service." — *Rev. Alfred Rowland, D.D.*

"One wonders a little at finding Thomas among the Twelve. The enterprise of Jesus was one which required glowing faith, a quick sense of the unseen, and an agile mind ready to see and appropriate new ideas. These are just the characteristics which Thomas did not possess." — *Rev. Lynn Harold Hough, D.D.* But Thomas was a doubter, if he needed "to be shown," yet he was ready to go with Jesus on that last sad journey to Jerusalem though he expected to die with him there. And when the proof of Christ's resurrection was given him, he was ready to cry, "My Lord and my God !" Christ has work for all kinds of laborers, the slow as well as the quick, provided all are honest workers.

The greatest problem in connection with the Twelve is that of Judas, the treasurer of the apostles who stole from their little fund, whom Christ called "a devil" and "the son of perdition," and who at the terrible crisis in Christ's life sold the Son of God to his enemies for thirty petty coins and then died an apparently unrepentant

MARK 6: 7. And he calleth unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits;

self-murderer. Why did our Lord, who "knew what was in man," select such a man for an apostle unless that he should be a standing example of the evil of covetousness and false ambition, and a standing warning to all Christians? "Out of it all this lesson comes, that great privilege and responsibility have to be reckoned for and judged; and that we who have had the place and work of disciples will have to say what we have done with them, what we have made of them and of ourselves." — *Rev. James Elder Cumming, D.D.*

"Simon Zelotes was 'the man who burned up.' There is something splendid about the huge onrush of a personality aflame. There is some wisdom in the proud avowal that it is better to wear out in furious activity than to rust out in innocuous desuetude, and the alternative seems to be complete in many cases. Edna St. Vincent Millay struck a chord of sympathy in most hearts when she penned her lovely verse,

'My candle burns at both ends,
It will not last the night,
But ah, my foes, and O my friends,
It gives a lovely light.'

Simon the Zealot was officially allied with the political party of furious protest, in open revolt against the Roman power. But Jesus touched this demon of rebellion, and the awful thrust and lunge of his passion was geared to the tasks of Christ's kingdom." — *Rev. Bernard C. Clausen, D.D.* The fiery zeal of Christianity attracts to itself those of equal zeal, and turns their energy into noble channels. Paul was one of these "fervent in spirit," which means "boiling in spirit," the very word in Greek which gives us "zealot."

"The words, 'Follow me,' suggest the idea of fellowship as an essential condition of discipleship. The primary purpose of the call was that the disciples 'should be with him' constantly and learn of him. No man is fit for Christian service who has not had some training with the Lord himself." — *Prof. Henry Schaeffer.*

II. THE WORK OF THE TWELVE, Mark 6: 7-13, 30. 7. And he calleth unto him the Twelve. Hostility to Christ was growing rapidly, and Christ knew well in what it would culminate. He perceived that the time had come for a more aggressive extending of his work and influence, to match this fast-spreading animosity. He was himself making a teaching circuit of Galilee, but one person could not go far enough or fast enough. Therefore he decided to "divide and conquer," breaking up the group

of twelve disciples into six pairs, and thus evangelizing seven times as fast. And began to send them forth by two and two. That they might strengthen, cheer, comfort, and advise each the other. Also, that each might fill out the other's lack. "They were not merely mated; they were matched. Christ was after a more perfect apostleship, and he made six whole men out of the twelve. Each man was the complement of his apostolic comrade. Peter the extremist went forth with Andrew the conservative; James the Elder with John the youth; Philip the dullard with Bartholomew the sage; Thomas the man of doubts with Matthew the man of strong convictions; James the champion of duty with Jude the champion of doctrine; Simon the zealot with Judas the traitor." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.* And he gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

Here also the demoniacs only were

mentioned, as Satan's influence culminated in them, but we see from verse 13 that many of those sick in ordinary ways were included in their ministry, and we learn from Matt. 10: 7, 8 that the apostles received power even to raise the dead.



Sandals.

8. And he charged them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse;

9. But *to go shod with sandals*: and, *said he*, put not on two coats.

10. And he said unto them, Wheresoever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence.

11. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them.

12. And they went out, and preached that *men* should repent.

8. And he charged them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only. Not even that, according to Matthew and Luke, though the reference there may simply forbid their taking pains to provide a staff if they had none already. Every traveller carried a staff to aid his walking and as a weapon against wild beasts and robbers. **No bread, no wallet, no money in their purse.** The wallet ("scrip" in the King James translation) was a leather bag for food, and was carried slung over the shoulder. Money was kept in the folds of the girdle, which constituted the "purse." Pedestrians would often, in those simple lands, set out for a journey with no money, being sure of hospitality everywhere; but Christ's directions exceeded even the common simplicity, and were intended to emphasize trust in God and concentration upon the spiritual work in hand. Thus to-day in all lands a religious worker is regarded as lacking in devotion if he finds time to amass wealth.

9. But *to go shod with sandals*. Simply soles strapped to the bare feet. "Shoes also were worn by Jews, costly shoes, such as were in use among the Babylonians, furnished with upper leather." — *New Century Bible*. And, *said he*, put not on two coats. They were not to go as well-to-do folks, with a coat and a cloak over it, but merely with the under garment or tunic worn by ordinary men. The poor would wear only this tunic — nothing under it, clothing entirely suitable in that hot climate.

10. And he said unto them, Wheresoever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. The exuberant hospitality of the East leads to vigorous rivalry in the entertaining of strangers, who are loaded with invitations and expected to go from house to house, being lavishly fêted at each, which is a great waste of time and leads to many quarrels among the villagers. Christ frowned upon this custom for his disciples, as unsuited to the singleness of purpose which his followers should exemplify. Moreover, they were to illustrate contentment, be satisfied with the entertainment they might hit upon, and not seek to better it. "Plain living and high thinking" is taught by these directions.

11. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them. Whenever the Pharisees, returning from a Gentile land, reached Judæa, they stamped off the dust from their shoes, as a sign that nothing of heathenism was adhering to their souls. The act thus symbolizes complete renunciation, and said to the hard-hearted and inhospitable strangers, "We have nothing to do with you." Thus Paul and Barnabas repudiated Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13 : 51), and by a like gesture Paul testified against the Jews of Corinth (Acts 18 : 6).

12. And they went out, and preached that *men* should repent. "'Repentance is the grand Christian act,' says Carlyle. It may truly enough be called the grand



Man with Cloak and Coat.

13. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Christian act in the sense that everything depends on it, and that religion begins its perfect work there. There are perhaps grander Christian acts than repentance, but without it none of them is possible. It is not life itself, but it is the gate to life, the portal through which the soul must pass into the Father's House." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.*

13. **And they cast out many demons.** What joy and amazement must have been theirs when they found themselves gifted with this power of healing and blessing! **And anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.** Oil was much used as an exterior application by the physicians of Christ's day, and was applied by the disciples as a symbol of their miraculous healing and as an aid to faith, much as clay was applied to blind eyes by the Great Physician himself. The Christians of the early church continued this practice; see Jas. 5 : 14.

All organized Christian work must be reported. Christianity has progressed largely because of the assemblies which have listened to accounts of the triumphs of the church. By such meetings the work is consolidated, the workers are encouraged, and new workers are led into the work. Such meetings were instituted by the Founder of Christianity himself, to whom (probably at Capernaum) the apostles came from all the places where they had been laboring (verse 30), telling him what experiences they had met and what successes they had gained. After we have done any piece of work for Jesus he wants to talk it over with us, and we can have no greater joy than these reporting conferences with our Master.

THE WORK OF CHRIST'S HELPERS TO-DAY. "From fishers to fishers of men. That is ever Christ's way. He dignifies and exalts our calling. He does not destroy the qualities of watchfulness and alertness these men had gained by their business as fishermen. He turns them to higher uses. What is your gift — song? You shall sing for him! Speech? You shall become a preacher of salvation. Sympathy? You shall minister to his sick and poor. What are you — a builder? You shall help to build the temple of God. A soldier? You shall fight the good fight of the faith. A servant? You shall be a bond-servant of Christ. Our Lord never destroys a faculty. He consecrates and exalts it." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

It is impossible to make a schedule of the work which Christ's helpers will do to-day. The tasks are as numerous and varied as the disciples. "It is fortunate that Jesus did not seek to give explicit instructions. The variety of circumstances in which men are placed would have made such a task impossible. He gave rather an illustration of how a life in perfect harmony with God adjusts itself to every human experience." — *Dean Herbert L. Willett.*

"A ship came across another vessel with sails blown away and masts broken. Glasses were brought to bear upon it, but there was no movement on deck, nor, indeed, any sign of life. A boat was put off to board and examine the derelict. On the deck, in a huddled heap they found one man with sunken cheeks and glassy eye and bony hands — a mere ruckle of bones — but not dead. They took the starved creature back with them, and when they got him on board they applied restoratives to him, and by and by consciousness returned, and the lips began to move, and those who bent over him caught this whispered sentence: 'There is another man — there is another man.' Saved ourselves, we ought to remember 'there is another man,' and seek to save him. The end of discipleship is apostleship." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

LESSON XI. — March 11.

JESUS FEEDS THE MULTITUDES. — Mark 6:31-44; 8:1-10.

PRINT Mark 6:31-44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* — JOHN 6:35.

Devotional Reading : Ezek. 34 : 11-16.

Primary Topic : A WONDERFUL PICNIC.

Lesson Material : Mark 6 : 31-44.

Memory Verse : Give us this day our daily bread. Matt. 6 : 11.

Junior Topic : A HUNGRY CROWD FED.

Lesson Material : Mark 6 : 31-44.

Memory Verse : Matt. 6 : 11.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS MEETING EVERY-DAY NEEDS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS' COMPASSION FOR HUMAN NEED.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes may build up the scene of the lesson with a sand tray, a bit of mirror for the lake, level sand covered with green tissue paper for the plain, hills in the background. Use bits of bright-colored paper for the people, placing them in hollow squares open at one end.

The Older Classes will discuss God's provision for man's physical needs, why he does not furnish us with food without our effort, why he allows whole nations to go hungry, and what is the Christian attitude with reference to poverty. Especially, turn the discussion into practical channels, as suggested by the following question.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
What more should the churches be doing to relieve the poverty and distress around us ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The feeding of the five thousand, April, A.D. 29, at the beginning of the third year of Christ's ministry. The feeding of the four thousand, the summer of the same year.

Place. — The first miracle, near Bethsaida, on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee ; the second miracle, in Decapolis, further south on the east coast of the lake.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Morrison's *The Return of the Angels*. Jowett's *The Silver Lining*. Ker's *The Victory of Faith*. Farrar's *Chats with Children of the Church*. Work's

Every Day. Milligan in *Jesus in the Corn-field*. Murray's *Like Christ*. McNeill's *Sermons*, Vol. 1. Vance's *In the Breaking of the Bread*. Kelman's *Things Eternal*. Trench's *Hulsean Lectures*. Hubert Wells's *For Mine Own People*. Clark's *Laws of the Inner Kingdom*. Ingram's *Faith of Church and Nation* and *The Gospel in Action*. David Smith's *Our Lord's Earthly Life*. Livingstone's *The Master Life*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

This miracle compared with other miracles of feeding in the Bible, such as the manna and the feeding of Elijah.

The feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand compared.

The spiritual interpretation of the miracles, John 6. Probable reaction of the different apostles to the miracle.

Character of the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Bible teachings regarding table blessings.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Meeting Every-day Needs.

I. CHRIST'S COMPASSION ON THE MULTITUDE, Mark 6 : 31-34.

The need of rest.

Christ and the crowds.

Shepherdless sheep.

The compassionate Christ.

II. GREAT NEED, SMALL STORE, Mark 6 : 35-38.

"Give ye them to eat."

The dismayed disciples.

The lad's lunch.

Our best for Jesus.

III. THE SMALL STORE MULTIPLIED, Mark 6 : 39-44 ; 8 : 1-10.

The wonderful meal.

The surplus bounty.

The feeding of the four thousand.

How Christ meets human need.

31. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

I. CHRIST'S COMPASSION ON THE MULTITUDE, Mark 6 : 31-34. The apostles had just returned from their evangelistic tour of Galilee. Christ himself had been preaching and working miracles in many places. There was urgent need of withdrawal to some quiet place where the apostles might report their experiences and receive further instructions from the Master. News had come of the execution of the beloved and honored herald of the Messiah, John the Baptist. The tidings must have saddened Jesus and the Twelve, and have suggested that the time was not ripe for further aggressive work. All these reasons led to the withdrawal from the western side of the Sea of Galilee.

31. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. They were probably in Capernaum, where they were well known and

32. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.

where throngs were wont to reach them. By a "desert" place Christ did not mean a place that was barren and forbidding, but an uninhabited place. He chose a beautiful spot, well suited to a vacation.

"Three elements of rest are provided for those who are able to gain leisure — communion with outward nature, true human fellowship, and closer and simpler access to Christ himself. Such seasons of leisure are not the object of life. They are given to those who have been working, and given to them that they may work again. 'Come ye apart into a desert place, and rest a while.' " — *Rev. John Ker, D.D.*

"These deliberately contrived seasons of spiritual rest will help us to realize the reality of the invisible. If we are to have a real sense of God in the crowd it must be by discipline in secret. In the second place, by going apart for rest we shall gain a bird's-eye view of the field of life and duty. There is nothing more hideous and confusing than an oil painting when viewed at the distance of an inch. To see it we must get away from it." — *Rev. John H. Jowett, D.D.*

"Agassiz spent an entire summer exploring his back yard. A merchant sent him a check for \$1,000 and invited him to take a trip to Europe. Agassiz replied that he was too busy to go to Europe, but proposed to investigate the treasures of his kitchen garden. Later he published his vacation travels in a garden under the title of *Elements of Zoology*. 'I like to sew when there is no thread in the machine, it runs so easily,' said a little girl. Agassiz really spent his vacation playing in the yard, but he kept a thread in the machine with which he was playing." — *Rev. James M. Farrar, D.D.*

For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. The Passover was at hand (John 6 : 4), and great crowds of pilgrims were on their way from the north down alongside the lake to Jerusalem. The fame of Christ's miracles and the splendor and winsomeness of his teachings caused thousands to wish to see him, and they would improve the opportunity as they passed through Capernaum, where he was known to make his headquarters.

32. And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart. The boat was probably Peter's or perhaps one of Zebedee's. Their course was eastward, around the



north shore of the lake, past Bethsaida-Julias, a town at the entrance of the Jordan into the lake. "Bethsaida-Julias was originally only a village, but was rebuilt and

33. And *the people* saw them going, and many knew *them*, and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outwent them.

34. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd : and he began to teach them many things.

enlarged by Herod Philip not long after the birth of Christ. He raised it to the dignity of a town, and called it Julius after Julia the daughter of Augustus. Philip occasionally resided there, and there died and was buried in a costly tomb. To the south of it was the green and narrow plain of *El-Batiah* (Butaiha) with abundant grass, and abundant space for the multitudes to have sat down." — *Cambridge Bible*.

33. And *the people* saw them going, and many knew *them*, and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outwent them. It was about ten miles around the end of the lake on foot and only about four miles across by water, but the crowd easily outwent the boat because evidently the wind was contrary or there was only a slight breeze. As the runners passed through the villages and cities they shouted their errand and thus added constantly to their numbers.

34. And he came forth and saw a great multitude. Taking the account here in Mark alone, one would understand that Jesus saw the "great multitude" as he "came forth" out of the boat. Some were there, but only the most rapid runners. From John 6 : 1-5, however, it is plain that not enough of a crowd greeted Jesus on his arrival to prevent his retiring with his disciples among the hills overlooking the plain, and having a conversation with them there. After a while, however, raising his eyes from their earnest conference, our Lord became aware of the great crowd that had gathered on the plain below. And he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. Matt. 9 : 36 tells of another occasion when Christ expressed the same feeling ; doubtless pity for the eager crowds, so hungry for religious comfort, guidance, and strength, came over him often, and was the divinely impelling force of much of his life. This same pity moved him to hot indignation against the "scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites," the "blind guides," the false leaders who should have been conducting the sheep to the green pastures and the still waters, and giving them the spiritual food they so much needed. And he began to teach them many things. Doubtless most of them were curious to see him work some great miracle, but he gave them what they needed rather than what they wanted, and worked a miracle only as that also was needed. Always in Christ's ministry his teaching was first, and the miracles were chiefly the "signs" to authenticate his teachings, the church bell to draw the congregation to the sermon.

THE COMPASSIONATE CHRIST. "Our Lord was interested in the multitude. This is the true test of love and sympathy. No man lacks opportunity to do good while he walks and talks with men. A telephone communication may afford an opportunity to be generous or heroic. An incident on the streets may offer a momentous occasion for compassion. The dull, tired faces of a crowd may invite the benison of a smile." — *Rev. Edgar Whitaker Work, D.D.*

"When Jesus looked out on the crowd he saw plenty to criticise, much that was wrong, a lot that was selfish, not a little that was vile. He saw Sabbath-breakers, people who were dishonorable in business, corrupt politicians, worldliness, hypocrisy. But the strange thing is that no criticism fell from his lips. He was moved with compassion. The sin of the world did not make him bitter." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D., L.L.D.*

"There is no question that an increasing compassion for the multitude has come upon man through Jesus Christ, and it would be difficult to find anything more expressly revealing the image of the Father." — *Rev. John Kelman, D.D.*

II. GREAT NEED, SMALL STORE, Mark 6 : 35-38. Our Lord might have taken matters into his own hands and have worked the miracle which followed without a word from or to the disciples, but that was not his way. He wanted them to bring their need to him, and to realize their own helplessness, so that the lesson of the miracle might sink more deeply into their hearts ; hence the conversation which follows. Thus also he wants us to place our difficulties and desires before him, even though he is fully aware of them without our telling.

35. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent. "The Passover being near, it would be the time of the spring equinox, the sun setting about six o'clock ; so that

35. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent ;

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat.

37. But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread, and give them to eat?

38. And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

the teaching had continued unto the late afternoon." — *The Bible for Home and School.*

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. The people had left home hastily and had brought no provisions with them, but they could find food in the farms and villages round about. "Send them away" is too often the plan even of Christians when the world's needy ones come thronging in : send them to public charities, to social organizations ; send them to science and philosophy ; send them to the libraries and art museums ; send them to lecture courses and magazines and radio receiving sets ; send them anywhere and everywhere except to Christ, the loving, wise, and powerful Son of God ! Whenever any need presents, of any kind, the Christian's first thought should be, "Let it come to Christ."

37. But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. That is always Christ's answer when his followers suggest any shifting of responsibility, any relief from the world's burdens : "Do it yourself. You are better able to do it than any one that is without the unfailing aid that I can give you. You cannot do it in your own power ; but if you begin, and do what you can, I am with you always, and I will never forsake you." The Christian has Christ's omnipotence for any task to which Christ commands him. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread, and give them to eat? Mark condenses the account, for Christ (John 6 : 5-7) had asked Philip whence they could obtain bread, and the slow-thinking, literal-minded disciple had answered that two hundred shillings' worth would not be enough to give just a little to every one. The word translated "shilling" is "denarius," wrongly translated "penny" in the King James version. It was worth from seven and a half to eight and a half pence, less than a shilling, which is twelve pence ; its intrinsic value was about fifteen cents in our money. The denarius, however, was in Palestine at this time the wage for a day's work of an ordinary laborer (Matt. 20 : 2, 9, 13). It could buy more than two dollars in America to-day, so that the sum named by the disciples was equal to four or five hundred dollars, far beyond the contents of their humble treasury. "An average household numbered five, and half the day's wage went for food — three meals. If a day's food for five cost half a denarius, two hundred denarii would barely furnish a single meal for over six hundred." — *Prof. David Smith.*

38. And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. Here again Mark's account is condensed, for John tells us that Andrew, the Finder, brought to Jesus a lad with five barley "loaves" (that is, flat cakes), and two small fishes (the word in Greek has an ending signifying "little"). It was probably the lad's luncheon, put up by his careful mother before she would let him run with the crowd to see the Wonder-worker (though some think he came ready to do a little trading in food among the crowd). Little did that boy know, when he willingly gave up his lunch (and boys are always hungry !) in what a marvellous way he would get it back again, and to what a blessed miracle he was contributing. All of us may have that boy's everlasting honor if we will just let Christ use whatever we have, be it little or much. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. "Five loaves and two fishes, plus Jesus Christ, come to a good deal more than 'two hundred shillings' worth of bread." — *Alexander MacLaren.*

OUR BEST FOR JESUS. "We all have something, if we know Christ at all. Don't say, 'I have nothing.' Were you ever converted, do you think? Then bring that, and he will bless that, and make it bread to others. Have you had experience of the power of prayer? Then bring that. These personal possessions must be in the cupboard somewhere. I don't ask for a Bibleful of knowledge, but bring what you know.

39. And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

Let us give Christ all we have. Bring your nothings. Do you say you are nothing? Yet nothing, with Christ as the unit in front of it, makes ten; and if you are twice nothing, yet with Christ in front you make a hundred. The emptier you are the better, if you will just come to Christ." — *Rev. John McNeill, D.D.*

"Christ gave the food to the disciples and the disciples to the multitude. He did not give it direct himself, but he used the ministry of the disciples. And if there is one truth which ought to be revived in the church more than another, it is the priesthood of the laity. People still imagine there is some kind of different standard of holiness required of a clergyman than of a layman. I defy you to find it in any page of the Bible."

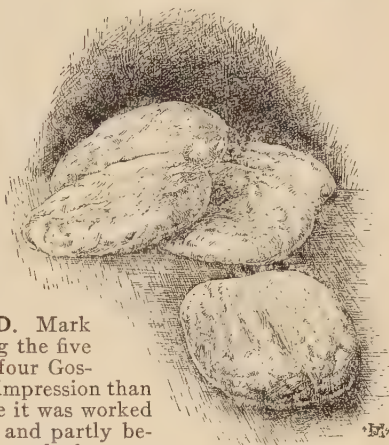
— *Bishop A. F. W. Ingram.*

III. THE SMALL STORE MULTIPLIED. Mark 6:39-44; 8:1-10. The miracle of feeding the five thousand is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. It evidently made a deeper and wider impression than any other of Christ's miracles, partly because it was worked for a larger number than any other miracle, and partly because it concerned the fundamental human need; for men can get air and water for nothing, and next to these the one thing indispensable for the physical life is food. Christ's countrymen were poor people, engaged, most of them, in a desperate struggle for bare existence, and nothing would so fire their imaginations as the ability to create food at will. Here was a leader worth having, exactly the leader for which the poor people had been longing. No wonder that, after the miracle, they were about to seize on him and compel him to be their king (John 6:15). "So much of the homage rendered to Christ by the world is just the recognition that from the Christ something is to be got — the homage of the world's selfishness, in fact, and not the homage of the world's submission to his authority and his right!" — *Henry W. Clark.*

39. And he commanded them that all should sit down by companies upon the green grass. "Sit down" is, strictly, "recline," according to the common custom of the times. "By companies" is literally, "symposia, symposia"; that is, as we would say, "banquet-tables, banquet-tables." "The Jewish dining-room was arranged like the Roman: three tables forming three sides of a square, and with divans or couches following the outside line of the tables. The open end of the square admitted the servants who waited at table. The people sat down, literally, *in table-companies*, arranged like guests at table; some companies of a hundred and some of fifty, in squares or oblongs open at one end, so that the disciples could pass along the inside and distribute the loaves." — *Marvin R. Vincent.*

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. "In ranks" is literally, "garden-beds, garden-beds." Here is another example of Mark's (Peter's) picturesque language, so often noted. On the grass, which was a bright green at the Passover season, the red, blue, and yellow robes of the Oriental crowd looked like gay flower-beds. It was a lively and exhilarating scene. The orderly arrangement was akin to the Creator's order which he has established throughout nature. Also it explains how the size of the crowd was so definitely arrived at.

41. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves. "Blessed" and "brake" are in different Greek tenses, the first denoting a single act and the second a continuous act or series of acts: "he kept breaking the loaves." The blessing of the food was the customary act of



Oriental Bread.

42. And they all ate, and were filled.
 43. And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes.
 44. And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

the head of a Jewish household ; our Lord was evidently in the habit of " asking a blessing " before eating, as is shown also in the account of the Emmaus supper, Luke 24 : 30, and Christians should follow his example. **And he gave to the disciples to set before them.** We are not told when the food was increased, whether as Jesus broke the bread, or as the disciples distributed it, or both. It would be like our Lord to give his disciples a share in the miracle-working, to strengthen their faith, and prepare them for their own use of miraculous power in their work. **And the two fishes divided he among them all.** Doubtless in the same way as the bread was distributed, that is, by means of the disciples.

42. **And they all ate, and were filled.** " The people were at first unaware of what was occurring ; but when they realized that the endless supplies were being produced by Jesus apparently from nothing, they knew that they were missing an amazing marvel. It was one which impressed their imagination and raised their hopes even more than his cures. No ordinary man could accomplish such a miracle. They were convinced that he must be their Messiah." — *W. P. Livingstone*. " As to the process of the miracle, speculations seem to be in vain. Theories of the acceleration of natural processes have been proposed for such occasions, but they are useless, and when closely examined are absurd. If this work was performed at all, it was done by creative power ; and that is enough to say of it." — *American Commentary*.

43. **And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes.** Christ himself, the Great Economist, bade the disciples gather the fragments that

remained, " that nothing be lost " (John 6 : 12). He could create more bread at a thought, but he would teach his disciples — and us — that nothing should be wasted, no matter how easily it may be obtained. The " baskets " used were the *cophinoi*, or small wicker baskets in which the Jews were wont to carry food on their travels, to avoid the necessity of eating food that might be ceremonially unclean.

44. **And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.** " Besides women and children," adds Matthew (14 : 21). These would not eat with the men, but in some separate place, according to custom, and their number might be a thousand, so that we may reckon six thousand as the total number fed.

THE FEEDING OF THE FOUR THOUSAND (Mark 8 : 1-10). After relating a number of miracles and teachings, and especially the journey of Christ and his disciples toward Tyre and Sidon, the longest journey of Christ's life, Mark tells us that they came back to the Sea of Galilee, and that there our Lord fed miraculously a second great company

numbering this time four thousand men, " besides women and children " (Matt. 15 : 38). The scene of this second miracle was again the eastern side of the lake, but apparently further to the south, halfway down or near the southern end, and this time also they were in a " desert " or uninhabited portion.

The multitude had been with Christ three days, as he taught them and healed their sick, and their food supply was exhausted. Many of them had come from a distance, and would faint by the way if sent home for food. The disciples — so easy is it to forget divine benefits ! — had forgotten the former miracle, or hesitated to ask for a repetition of it in view of Christ's frequent refusals to work miracles. But Christ himself, having compassion on the people, provided them with an abundance of food. This miracle is distinctly differentiated by Mark from the feeding of the five thousand : (1) in the number fed, four thousand this time ; (2) in the length of time the crowd had been with Jesus ; (3) in the initial supply, which is this time seven loaves



Baskets of Palestine.

and "a few" fishes; (4) in the fragments gathered up, which this time filled seven *spurides* or large rope-baskets, like that in which Paul was lowered from the Damascus wall (Acts 9 : 25); and (5) in the impression made by the miracle, which was not followed in this second case by any popular outburst offering Christ a crown, for the miracle lacked the element of surprise, and the crowd had grown familiar with marvels, — one of the reasons why Christ was hesitant to work miracles often. The feeding of the four thousand was a different miracle from the feeding of the five thousand, and not a recorder's careless repetition.

How CHRIST MEETS HUMAN NEED. "As we look at a sheaf of grain, what does it represent? First and foremost God's bounty. It is he who has visited the earth and watered it; who has prepared corn for his people, when he has so provided for it; who has crowned the year with his goodness, and whose paths drop fatness (Ps. 65 : 9, 11). But none the less is it true that, in the production of that sheaf, man has had his part to play. It was by his hands that the ground was broken up, that it might be in the fittest state for receiving the precious seed; by him that the seed was sown; and by him again that in the time of harvest the work of ingathering was accomplished. The old law still holds good: 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread' (Gen. 3 : 19); or, as it was rendered by the Christian apostle, 'If any will not work, neither shall he eat' (2 Thess. 3 : 10)." — *Rev. George Milligan*.

"Truly the Bible might be likened well to the five barley loaves of the Lord's miracle. Seeing them about to set before the great spiritual hunger of the world, seeing the multitudes waiting to be fed, even disciples might have been tempted to exclaim, 'What are they among so many?' But the great Giver of the feast confidently replies, 'Make the men sit down'; and they *have* sat down — wise men and simple, philosophers and peasants, 'besides women and children,' — and there has been enough and to spare; all have been nourished, all have been quickened; none have been sent empty away." — *Archbishop Trench*.

Christ himself gave us (John 6 : 26-59) the meaning and the purpose of these two stupendous miracles. They are not intended mainly to teach us that he will supply our physical needs, though that is certainly one lesson to be drawn from the miracles; but chiefly that we are not to work for perishing food but for the bread of life, the bread out of heaven, the true bread, the living bread, which is Jesus Christ himself. Freely as on the Plain of Butaiha he gives himself to us. He uses agents, now as then. He comes to us in his Word, his ministers, in his Holy Spirit. We may refuse him, but also we may gloriously accept him, and, receiving him, we shall live forever. What more blessed truth can men learn and take up into their hearts and lives?

"What a glorious comfort it is to think that He who worked this miracle is the Lord of the other world as well as of this, and that he will, through the valley of the shadow of death, be with us as the Good Shepherd to feed us and to tend us." — *Bishop A. F. W. Ingram*.

LESSON XII. — March 18.

JESUS TEACHES SINCERITY. — Mark 7 : 1-23.

PRINT vs. 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Keep thy heart with all diligence;
For out of it are the issues of life.* — PROV. 4 : 23.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 24 : 1-6.

Primary Topic : OBEYING GOD AND OUR PARENTS.

Lesson Material : Mark 7 : 1-13.

Memory Verse : Children, obey your parents. Eph. 6 : 1a.

Junior Topic : HONORING GOD AND OUR PARENTS.

Lesson Material : Mark 7 : 1-13.

Memory Verse : Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.
Eph. 6 : 1.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : SINCERITY IN RELIGION.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS DENOUNCES FORMALISM.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be taught the lesson in regard to the honor that should be paid to parents. They also need to be taught sincerity in worship and in all their relations to others. Show them why they go to church, what is the real purpose of Bible reading and prayer, what true Sabbath-keeping is, what proofs of sincere friendship they should be giving, what is real obedience in school, with many other outreaches of the topic.

The Older Classes will find in this lesson a text for a wide study of vital as against formal religion. Do not condemn forms absolutely, but show their value at the same time that you point out their danger. Use many illustrations of false and true religion, and seek to make the lesson bear fruit in more genuine Christian lives.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
What religious forms need to be vitalized ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — April, A.D. 29, in the third year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The Pharisees and their teachings.
Christ's radicalism.
Christ and the Old Testament.
Pharisaic formalism.
Old Testament teachings concerning filial piety.
Teachings and work of the scribes.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT : Truth in the Heart.****I. EMPTY FORMS, vs. 1-7.**

Ceremonial purifications.
Lips and hearts.
What is true worship?

II. VAIN TRADITIONS, vs. 8-13.

Filial piety commanded.
The selfishness of sons and daughters.
What is true regard for others?

III. A PURE HEART, vs. 14-23.

Exterior defilements.
Inward defilements.
What is heart purity?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Solly's *The Gospel according to Mark*. Bickersteth in *The Pulpit Commentary*. Burton's *Studies in the Gospel according to Mark*. Parker's *People's Bible*. McKeehan in *Best Sermons*, 1924. Menzies's *The Earliest Gospel*. Vaughan's *Plain Words on Christian Living*.

1. And there are gathered together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem,

2. And had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread with defiled, that is, unwashed, hands.

I. EMPTY FORMS, vs. 1-7. After the feeding of the five thousand our Lord gave in the synagogue of Capernaum his great interpretative sermon on the Bread of Life. He followed this with many miracles of healing in the land of Gennesaret, his fame increasing constantly. In the meantime the scribes and Pharisees, Christ's bitter enemies, having visited Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, returned to

Galilee, and took up again their shameful work in opposition to the Saviour's loving deeds and words of wisdom. The conflict which resulted is the theme of our lesson.

1. And there are gathered together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem. Very likely some of the religious leaders from Jerusalem had returned with the scribes and Pharisees of Galilee. They had heard of the attempt to make Christ king and of his popularity, and, fearing for their own influence, inaugurated this new attack upon our Lord.

2. And had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread with defiled, that is, unwashed hands. Mark was writing chiefly for the Christians in Rome, who would not understand Jewish terms, and would take "defiled" in a literal sense if he did not ex-

plain it. This knowledge of the failure of some of the disciples to observe to the letter all of the multitudinous Pharisaic rules regarding ablutions was obtained



Pitcher and Basin.

3. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders;

4. And *when they come* from the market-place, except they bathe themselves, they eat not; and many other things there are, which they have received to hold, washings of cups, and pots, and brasen vessels.)

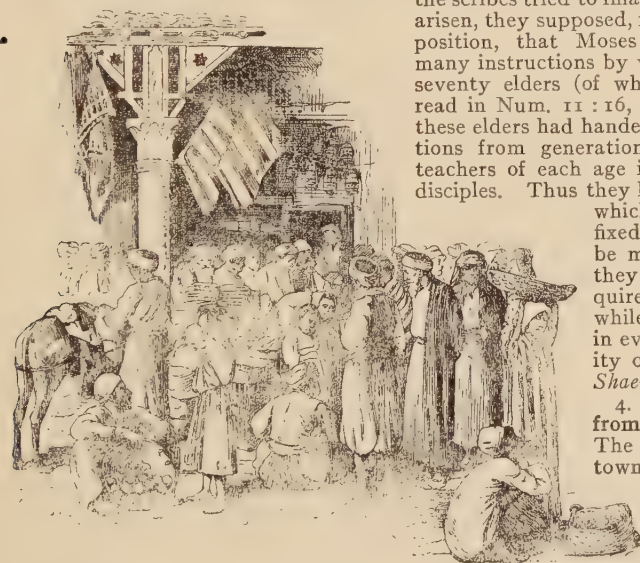
probably by some scribe or Pharisee who joined in the social gatherings of the Christians, perhaps by pretending to be a Christian himself, or at least an honest inquirer.

3. **For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not.** The word translated "diligently" means, literally, "with the fist," and is understood to imply that the washing was performed by closing the fist of one hand and rubbing it on the open palm of the other hand, both being plunged into water; then the operation was repeated, the hands being reversed. The Jews ate with their fingers, and therefore their hands were washed before each meal, water being poured over them by a servant. The disciples were thus cleanly, of course; but what is here alluded to is the ceremonial washing in addition to the ordinary. As disciples of a religious leader, the twelve apostles were expected to be very punctilious concerning this ceremony. It is told of the Rabbi Akiba that when he was a prisoner, supplied with only enough water to keep him alive, he preferred to use it for these formal washings, and so died of thirst. The Jews praised this act highly. **Holding the tradition of the elders.** These rules for ceremonial washings were not contained in the Old Testament, but they had grown up around the writings of Moses through the interpretations and additions of Jewish scribes and Rabbis. They were written in commentaries, especially the Talmud, a large section of which is filled with such formal and foolish regulations. "The 'tradition of the elders' was an expedient for attaching the authority of Moses to the later teaching of the scribes. After the Pentateuch was closed, no more could be added to the written Law of Moses. But many of the laws were only the brief expression of ancient usage, and others had gathered around them explanations concerning the rites or customs with which they dealt. These explanations, it was believed, came from the same Mosaic source, and when

the scribes tried to imagine how they had arisen, they supposed, for it was only a supposition, that Moses had communicated many instructions by word of mouth to the seventy elders (of whose appointment we read in Num. 11: 16, 17, 23-29), and that these elders had handed down these instructions from generation to generation, the teachers of each age imparting it to their disciples. Thus they had an oral tradition,

which was not unalterably fixed in writing, but could be modified to suit what they considered the requirements of the case, while it could still claim, in every form, the authority of Moses." — *Henry Shaen Solly.*

4. **And when they come from the market-place.** The central square of the town, where open-air buying and selling were conducted, and many business transactions carried out. The market-place was also a social



Market-place.

meeting-place, a frequent arena for public debate, and a space where judges held court. The phrase is almost equivalent to "When they come from their day's work." Except they bathe themselves, they eat not. A washing of the entire body, and not

5. And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands?

6. And he said unto them, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honoreth me with their lips,
But their heart is far from me.

7. But in vain do they worship me,
Teaching as *their* doctrines the precepts of men.

merely of the hands, is here to be understood, since in the crowds of all sorts of people, many of them Gentiles, that filled the market-place, orthodox Jews would be quite certain to incur ceremonial defilement by contact with persons technically unclean. **And many other things there are, which they have received to hold, washings of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels.**

"The cups were ordinary drinking cups of earthenware or metal (compare Mark 9: 41; 14: 23); the pots were pitchers of wood or stone (compare Lev. 15: 12; John 2: 6); the brazen vessels were cooking pots of copper or brass (1 Sam. 2: 14; 2 Chron. 35: 13)." — *The Bible for Home and School.*

5. And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? The

ancients regarded cleanliness as very important, establishing many public baths and spending much time in them. "Defiled hands" does not mean that the disciples' hands were not perfectly clean, but that they had not been washed in the exact way prescribed by these formalists.

6. And he said unto them, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites. A hypocrite is an actor, a person who pretends to be something that he is not. These scribes and Pharisees were acting religion but did not possess the reality of it, as they proved by their hostility to Christ, the worker of good deeds and teacher of noble truths. **As it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips.** The quotation is from Isa. 29: 13, and God himself is the speaker. "This people" refers to Isaiah's countrymen. They did well, of course, to honor God with their lips, since "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," and God is well pleased when men speak and sing his praises; but he is not pleased with false praise, with lip service, with honoring phrases that are not backed up with honoring deeds. **But their heart is far from me.** Where was their



Actors Wearing Masks. From Calmet.

heart? With self-seeking, with greed, with pride and arrogance, with conceit and hatefulness. Where these are, God is not; they are at the farthest extreme from God.

7. **But in vain do they worship me.** Worship of God should produce the finest and most blessed of results: a noble character, peace in the heart, joy in the life, rich friendships, righteousness, an eternity of bliss. Such false worship as is here described, worship that is only a parade of forms and ceremonies, produces no good result whatever, but is only vanity, emptiness. **Teaching as *their* doctrines the precepts of men.** Religious teaching must be based on the word of God, or it will totter and fall. So-called religious education that is founded on secular philosophy and mere morality is not religious at all, and falls far short of the highest education.

WHAT IS TRUE WORSHIP? We call our worship in church a "service," but it is rather a preparation for service; its purpose is to give us strength and wisdom for service through communion with God and instruction in God's ways.

8. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men.
 9. And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition.
 10. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death:

It is true that merely going to church is not worship and also that one may worship God out in the woods; but one is far more likely to find God in a place dedicated to worship and among a company who are seeking him than outdoors where is only inarticulate beauty. Note the merry makers in parks on Sunday afternoons: how many of them look worshipful and exalted?

True worship, like all other noble acts, requires preparation. If we do not on Saturday "do all our work," but leave much of it undone to disturb our minds on Sunday, we shall have only a part of our spirits to give to God on his day, and we shall be constantly tempted to desecrate the Sabbath with secular employment. And not only is our work to be got out of the way, but our souls are to be calmed with prayer and Bible reading and filled with joyous anticipation, so that we shall go to the holy day with a real appetite for its abundant spiritual food.

"The discipline of 'the Pharisees and all the Jews' was no easy matter after all. Do we sufficiently consider that the men whom we hold in contempt put themselves to far greater trouble in maintaining their religious duties than we do? Beware, lest contempt be mistaken for spirituality! This frequent washing of hands, this abstinence from meat until the hands had been washed, this washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables, this tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, when put together, show that the religious habits of the Pharisee were such as required time, patience, and constancy, and not a little self-denial. We have escaped the trouble; have we within us the spirit of consecration of which all outward habits should be the sign? Are we satisfied with mere sentiment, or do we endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ?" — *Joseph Parker*. In rejecting mere formalism let us be certain to put in its place religious activities of the genuine sort that call for at least as much energy, time, money, and thoughtfulness.

"There is no worship where there is no joy. For worship is something more than either the fear of God or the love of him. It is delight in him." — *F. W. Faber*.

"Reverence is the very clue to fruitful, practical living." — *J. H. Jowett*.

"What a happiness were it if, every time you come to his solemn worship, some of your strongest sins did receive a new wound, and some of your weakest graces a new strength." — *Leighton*.

It is always possible for a worshipful heart to find time for worship. When General "Chinese" Gordon was on a campaign, his white handkerchief laid before his tent every morning signified that he was at prayer within, and he was not disturbed by the presentation of any matter, however urgent.

II. VAIN TRADITIONS, vs. 8-13. The commandments of men are sharply contrasted by our Lord with the commandments of God. The Son of God was jealous for his Father's honor, which he saw disregarded by those whose chief joy it should have been to promote it. He illustrated the difference with an indignant example.

8. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. The scribes and Pharisees not only erected their own rules of worship and of daily conduct, assigning to them divine sanctity and authority, but they had the audacity actually to substitute them for the true laws of God. Ceremony and form drove out genuine prayer, and love of the Bible, and love of God, and obedience to God's commands.

X "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," said Christ emphatically; and their man-made rules and forms were to the scribes and Pharisees a most absorbing mammon.
 9. And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition. "Full well" is strongly ironical: "It is a fine thing in you to reject God's laws in favor of your own fancies!" Under the guise of explanations of the laws of Moses and explanations of them, the scribes and Pharisees were really rejecting the laws of Moses. The spirit of the two sets of laws was antagonistic. With one dwelt freedom, with the other oppression. One was alive, the other dead. They could not both be true.

10. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother. The "first commandment with promise," Ex. 20: 12. Moses said it, but God first said it to Moses.

11. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given to God;

12. Ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother;

13. Making void the word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do.

Christ often set off against the Old Testament rules his own "But I say unto you." He had a full right to, for it was he that gave the Old Testament rules to man in the first place. But the scribes and Pharisees had no such right. And, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. This is from Ex. 21: 17, and illustrates the perfect honor to parents which the Old Testament requires of children. But what, it may be asked, if the parents are not honorable? Even then the children are to honor parenthood in them. What if they do what is evil? Even then their children are not to speak evil of them.

11. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given to God. "The word *corban* is a Hebrew word, meaning 'that which is brought near,' 'a gift or offering to God.' Hence, figuratively, the place where these offerings were deposited was called the *corbanas* or sacred treasury (see Matt. 27: 6)." — *Dean Bickersteth*. "For a man to say that his property was 'Corban' properly meant that it was devoted to God, and the Pharisees insisted that one who had made such a vow must not employ his property for the relief even of father and mother. But strangely enough they did not insist that he should in any practical way devote it to God. He could keep it and use it for himself just as before. Thus in putting a strained emphasis on the sacredness of the vow, they set aside the plain duty to care for one's parents." — *Ernest De Witt Burton*.

12. Ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother. Even if he should change his mind, and want to help his father and mother in their poverty, he had, by that magic word, "Corban," "Devoted," removed his possessions from his own reach; the priests would see to that.

13. Making void the word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered. The word of God required filial piety, respect for the aged parents, pity for their poverty and necessities, eagerness to minister to their needs. All of this the Jewish formalists had invalidated by means of a baseless regulation. And many such like things ye do. The refinements upon these rules seem almost endless. It was stipulated how much water must be used in washing the hands, and just how far the water should go up the wrist; the more pious washed the hands at the close as well as at the beginning of a meal, and even between the courses. "Earthen vessels that had contracted impurity were to be broken; those of wood, horn, glass, or brass immersed; while, if vessels were bought of Gentiles, they were to be immersed, put into boiling water, purged with fire, or at least polished." — *Edersheim*.

WHAT IS TRUE REGARD FOR OTHERS? One of the fundamental duties of religion is to love others and bless them. We cannot bless them unless we love them, but our service for them will be cold and heartless. We cannot help blessing them if we love them, for true affection goes out in helpfulness and finds in it an abounding joy.

The Christian's ideal for his life is the life of the Master who "went about doing good." The good he did was not formal, recorded in a ledger, done by rote, but was unforced, uncalculating, and spontaneous.

It has been well said that we are not to be content with benevolence but with beneficence; the first is merely wishing others well, while the second is doing well by others.

The old proverb says that "charity (love) begins at home," but it does not end there. If we do not love our brother, our sister, our father and mother, whom we have seen, we cannot love God and the men whom we have not seen. Home is the great practising ground of love.

III. A PURE HEART, vs. 14-23. EXTERIOR DEFILEMENTS. We read that after Jesus had this discussion with the Pharisees, he "called to him the multitude again." "It is not often that Jesus 'calls the people unto him' for the purpose of giving an address. He commonly finds the people already gathered, and the address is a matter of accident. But here is a solemn exception. I say, solemn. If Christ called the people to give them a message, he must have thought it a very important message. And so it is." — *George Matheson*.

The message sprang directly from the Pharisees' complaint, and dealt with the inconsequential exteriors and circumstances of life, and with life's interior realities. What is real? What is fundamental and essential? On what can I confidently build? To an earnest soul nothing is more important than the answer to these questions.

Our Lord answers them, in the first place, with a negative. Nothing that comes from outside the soul counts. The soul is a regal entity. It is supreme master in its own domain. Sin cannot be forced upon it from without. Shame and impurity cannot stand at the soul's boundary and effect an entrance against the soul's will and desire. The Pharisees believed that they could be defiled by an insect's lighting upon them, by brushing against a heathen in a crowd, by eating a mouthful of meat that had not been butchered in just the prescribed fashion. "You are entirely on the wrong course in guarding against defilement," said the Master. "It does not come at all from that direction." That was his negative teaching.

INWARD DEFILEMENTS. Over against that negative teaching Christ immediately placed the positive teaching: "Man is defiled only by what comes from within his heart." He gave a fearful list of those unclean products of our inner selves: evil thoughts, lustfulness, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickednesses, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness! The list is typical, and sadly complete. Somewhere in it every man may find himself. These, said the Master, are what put a man to shame, and not the failure to comply with a man-made custom or rite, fashion or observance.

"The view put forward in this passage that purity depends on the state of the heart, and can be insured in no other way than by keeping the heart clean, is the distinctive moral doctrine of Jesus, and is to be recognized throughout the whole of his teaching. In Matt. 5: 21-48 it is set forth most systematically. See the Beatitudes, Matt. 5: 8, also Matt. 6: 22, 23; 7: 17, 18; Luke 6: 43-45, and the sayings about good soil and good fruit." — *Prof. Allan Menzies.*

WHAT IS HEART PURITY? "Blessed are the pure in heart," said Christ, "for they shall see God." That is the test of heart purity, the vision of God. If you are not conscious of a life lived with God, then look to your heart, and obtain Christ's cleansing for it.

"From a pure heart proceeds the fruit of good life." — *Thomas à Kempis.*

"We shall never win a victory outside us till we are masters, with Christ, in our own house." — *Rev. Charles Brown, D.D.*

"Unless the vessel whence we drink is pure
Whate'er is poured therein turns foul, be sure." — *Horace.*

"The more you do God's work within yourself, the more he will give you the opportunity of doing external work for him." — *Neale.*

"Your first duty in life is toward your *afterself*. So live that your afterself — the man you *ought* to be — may in his time be possible and actual.

"Far away in the years he is waiting his turn. His body, his brain, his soul, are in your boyish hands. He cannot help himself.

"What will you leave for him?"

"Will it be a brain unspoiled by lust or dissipation, a mind trained to think and act, a nervous system true as a dial in its response to the truth about you? Will you, Boy, let him come as a man among men in his time? Or will you throw away his inheritance before he has a chance to touch it? Will you turn over to him a brain distorted, a mind diseased, a will untrained to action, a spinal cord grown through and through with the evil grass of that vile harvest we call wild oats?" — *President David Starr Jordan.*

"How ready are we to throw the blame of our own transgressions upon circumstances, upon companions, upon education, upon parents — anywhere rather than upon ourselves! If I had been differently trained — if I had been duly warned — if I had been less, or more, indulged — if I had never known this person or that — I should have escaped that rock upon which I have now made shipwreck! It is over again the original excuse, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me' — it was God's fault — 'she gave me of the fruit, and I did eat!' Let us learn a truer lesson. What could that friend or that companion, what could that circumstance or this providence, have availed against me, if there had not been first, deep within, the pre-occupying and predisposing heart of sin? Do you think that a chance word, even if it were the word of guilty knowledge or the word of intentional temptation, could have sufficed to bring an unclean out of a clean thing?" — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

"Are we Christian enough to take Jesus and his proposals in earnest? Are we noble enough and heroic enough to put first things first and to seek that Kingdom which Jesus proclaimed and then died to reveal? Is God, the Father of Jesus and through Jesus our Father, so real in our experience and so controlling in our convictions as to permit us to trust absolutely in spiritual forces for the attainment of a Kingdom of holy love? If so, then we are torchbearers of Christ's triumphal procession up the hills of light. If not, then we *may be religious*, but we are *not Christian*!" — *Rev. Hobart D. McKeehan.*

LESSON XIII. — March 25.

REVIEW: JESUS PROCLAIMS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.* — **MATT. 9:35.**

Devotional Reading: Mal. 3:1-6.

Primary Topic: STORIES ABOUT JESUS.

Memory Verse: Jesus of Nazareth . . . went about doing good. Acts 10:38.

Junior Topic: MARK'S STORIES ABOUT JESUS.

Memory Verse: Jesus of Nazareth . . . went about doing good . . . for God was with him. Acts 10:38.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: HOW JESUS BEGAN HIS WORK.

Topic for Young People and Adults: THE EARLY MINISTRY OF JESUS.

A number of plans for the review lesson are given, that the teacher may select the form of review best suited to the age and advancement of his class. Two or more plans may be combined, if that is preferred.

I. BASHFUL PICTURES REVIEW.

This review is intended for the younger classes, and will use the series of Lesson Pictures issued by the publishers of this volume. Fasten them in order on a screen, but with their backs turned outward. Tell the pupils that the pictures are very bashful, and will not face the class till they discover that the class knows about them; then they will consent to be turned around. So the teacher will ask questions about the first lesson, and when it is clear that the class knows about that lesson, the first picture will be turned face outward. Thus you will continue till all the pictures are reversed. The pictures may be given to the pupils as souvenirs of the quarter, and will surely be treasured.

II. A SYNOPSIS REVIEW.

Ask the pupils to prepare at home during the week synopses of all the lessons of the quarter, ready to be read in the class on review Sunday. Set a limit of words, and one hundred for each will be about right. The synopses are to contain brief statements of the events or settings of the lessons, with their principal teachings. In the class the teacher, taking up the first lesson, will have two or three pupils read their synopses, and will discuss them, praising their excellencies and pointing out any lack. Then the other lessons will be taken up in the same way.

III. A QUESTION PICNIC.

To a picnic each person present contributes his share of the food, so in a question picnic all the pupils will propose questions on the lessons which they have written out at home. Divide the lessons among the pupils, telling each to write six questions on the lesson assigned him, covering the lesson as well as he can. Appoint times during the week for going over his questions with each pupil, making sure that they are clear and fair. Each question will be plainly written on a separate slip of paper. A "picnic basket" will receive all the questions. The pupils will

draw the questions in turn, read them aloud, and answer them if possible ; otherwise, the neighbor on the left will have a chance. Those answering questions correctly retain their slips of paper, and the teacher may give a little reward to the member of the class who thus carries off the largest number of slips.

IV. CHRIST FACTS.

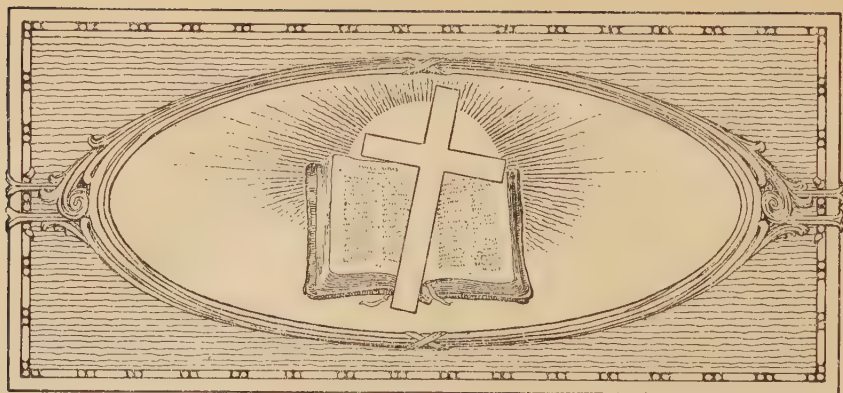
For this form of review set the pupils to work at home making a list of all the facts relating to Christ which they have learned from the quarter's lessons. Of course a list of many hundreds of these facts might be made, but you will not discourage the class by any estimate of numbers. In the recitation some one with a short list will begin by reading it, and the others will check off on their lists, as he reads, the same facts as they have themselves recorded them, or will jot them down if they have overlooked any. Then another pupil with a short list will read the facts on his list that have not been given, while the others check them off or note them as before. Thus you will proceed with the lists, taking those that are longer and still longer, though the process of checking off facts will tend to make the reading of each list about like those that have preceded.

V. A PORTRAIT REVIEW.

Each lesson of the quarter has told us something new about Jesus and so has contributed something to our idea of him, has added something to our mental portrait of him. If your class is old enough for the task, it will interest them to write word pictures of Jesus, drawing their material from these twelve lessons solely. Have these characterizations read in the class, discussing each as there is time. They will be varied, and will disclose the spiritual progress made by each writer during the quarter.

VI. LIFE MOTTOES.

Our quarter's lessons are full of sentences and parts of sentences that make splendid life mottoes. Set the pupils to searching for them and copying them out. Each will bring to the class his list of mottoes. First one pupil will read a single motto from his list, and it will be discussed. The teacher will write it on the blackboard or a large sheet of paper, and the pupils that did not select it will add it to their lists. Then a second pupil will read a motto, and so you will proceed till all the mottoes have been read and discussed, which will involve a fairly thorough review of the teachings of the quarter.



SECOND QUARTER.

APRIL 1 — JUNE 24, 1928.

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD.

STUDIES IN MARK.

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

LESSON I (14)*. — April 1.

JESUS THE SUFFERING MESSIAH. — Mark 8: 27—9: 1; 9: 30—32; 10: 32—34.

PRINT Mark 8: 27-37.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* — MARK 8: 34.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 63 : 7-9.

Primary Topic : JESUS THE GREAT HERO.

Lesson Material : Mark 8 : 27-37.

Memory Verse : Christ died for our sins. 1 Cor. 15 : 3.

Junior Topic : THE HEROISM OF JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 8 : 27-37.

Memory Verse : 1 Cor. 15 : 3.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE COST OF BEING LOYAL TO CHRIST.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS INTERPRETS HIS MESSIAHSHIP.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes need to be taught the great lesson of self-denial. They have their crosses, which are heavy for their young shoulders, and need to learn how to bear them bravely and gladly for Christ and with his help. This may be made one of the most practical and profitable of lessons for the younger children.

The Older Classes have in this lesson the great topic of worldliness. We are living in an age when worldliness is a most

alluring temptation, for never before was the world so interesting and attractive, and never before, perhaps, have Christians found it so hard to take up the cross. Each member of the class will be able to illustrate from his own experience the difficulties of the struggle with worldliness, and, it is to be hoped, the means by which one can come off more than conqueror.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
In what points is the present age at war with the principles of Christianity ?

* The asterisk marks the continuation number in this series of lessons,



HEAD OF CHRIST.

(FROM "CHRIST AND THE RICH RULER.")

HOFMANN.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Summer, A.D. 29, in the third year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — Near Cæsarea Philippi.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Description of the northern part of Palestine.
Peter's ups and downs.
Christ's references to his deity.
The necessity for Christ's cross.
Our crosses.
Conditions of Christian discipleship.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Coffin's *The Creed of Jesus*. Morrison's *The Weaving of Glory*. Matheson's *Messages of Hope*. Vance's *In the Breaking of the Bread*. Clausen's "Preach It Again." Wilson's *Sermons Preached in Clifton College Chapel*. Lorimer's *Jesus the World's Saviour*. Dawson's *The Divine Challenge*. Brace's *Short Sermons to News Boys*. Sam Jones's *Sermons*,

Vol. 1. Bibb's *Polished Stones*. Beecher's *Lectures to Young Men*. McConnell's *A Year's Sermons*. Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. Burgess's *Sermons on the Christian Life*. Finney's *The Way of Salvation*.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Cost of Being Loyal to Christ.

I. PETER CONFESSING, Mark 8 : 27-30.

Opinions concerning Christ.
Peter's conviction.
Testifying for Jesus.

II. PETER REBUKED, Mark 8 : 31-33.

Peter shrinks from the cross.
The things of God — or of men.
Worldly and heavenly viewpoints.

III. CROSS-BEARING, Mark 8 : 34-38 ;

9 : 1, 30-32 ; 10 : 32-34.

What following Christ involves.
Christ's prophecies of his death.
Losing life and saving it.

27. And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the villages of Cæs-ä-ré'-ä Phi-lip'-pi: and on the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am?

I. PETER CONFESSING, Mark 8 : 27-30. As we approach the close of Christ's short life on earth the shadow of the cross falls along it, growing ever darker, while at the same time the supernal glories of his Father's home shoot dazzlingly through the shadow now and then, as if the home door were ajar in expectation of his return, and the home lights were shining out to meet the beloved Son of God. These are the two contrasted thoughts of the quarter ahead of us.

27. And Jesus went forth, and his disciples. The last place mentioned is Bethsaida-Julias (Mark 8 : 22), where Christ healed a blind man. From that city the little company of thirteen travelled northward twenty-five or thirty miles along the eastern bank of the Jordan, passing Lake Merom. Into the villages of Cæsarea Philippi. This place was at the northern boundary of ancient Israel, near Dan. At first it was a Phœnician or Canaanite holy place, called Baal-Gad or Baal-Hermon, Mt. Hermon being near at hand. Later the Macedonian Greeks called it Paneas from its deep cavern which they dedicated to the wood god, Pan; its modern name is Banias. Herod the Great built there a magnificent marble temple dedicated to Augustus Cæsar. In Christ's day it had become part of the tetrarchy of Herod Philip, who enlarged and adorned the place, changing its name to Cæsarea Philippi in honor of himself and the Emperor Tiberius, it being thus distinguished from the Cæsarea on



Mount Hermon from the Damascus Road. Wilson.

28. And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets.

29. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

the Mediterranean coast, the Roman capital of Palestine where Paul was later imprisoned for two years. And on the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, **Who do men say that I am?** The region through which Christ passed was, in the main, a country of profound and impressive solitudes. Jesus went there partly for rest and quiet and partly in order that, in preparation for the solemn events before him, he might converse seriously and at length with his disciples and instruct them regarding the climax of his earthly career.

28. **And they told him, saying, John the Baptist.** Herod Antipas, who had slain John the Baptist, when he heard of Christ's wonderful works and marvellous teachings, was pricked in his guilty conscience and thought that the murdered prophet had returned to life. The rumor spread among the common people, based on John's repeated prophecies of the coming Messiah whose herald he was. **And others, Elijah.** Mal. 4: 5 had prophesied of an Elijah who would come to earth just before the Messiah; the Baptist had declared (John 1: 21) that he was not Elijah, and therefore, the people thought, perhaps Jesus was the great prophet returned from the grave. **But others, One of the prophets.** Some of the people thought that Christ was Jeremiah (Matt. 16: 14) whom the Jews of that time considered to be the chief of the prophets, greater even than Isaiah.

29. **And he asked them, But who say ye that I am?** The people did not regard Christ as the Messiah, they did not see in him what John the Baptist saw, the Lamb of God who was to take away the sins of the world. But the opinion of the common people mattered little as compared with the thought of the Twelve, for Christ's immediate disciples had become acquainted with his character and were instructed regarding the origin and purpose of his life on earth. They were to continue his work after his death, so that, in a sense, his success or failure depended on their answer to this question. It is the question of questions for every soul: "Who say you that Jesus is?" It makes no difference what the books say, or the preachers, or the professors in college, or your acquaintances and friends: *what say YOU?* Peter answereth and saith unto him, **Thou art the Christ.** His full answer, given by Matthew, was "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Mark also omits the praise that Christ gave to Peter for his bold confession, and his promise that on such insight and courage as he had shown should be built, as on a solid foundation, the glorious structure of Christ's eternal church. Peter was dictating this gospel to Mark, and the aged disciple was too modest to record such things. Nevertheless it was to Peter's eternal credit that he was so ready to own Christ's deity and to perceive Christ's aim. Peter stands out through all the ages as the typical Christian confessor — prompt, courageous, complete. He knew that Jesus was his Saviour, his heart was full of gratitude to him, and his thanksgiving took the inevitable form of Christian testimony. "Peter's answer, 'Thou art the Christ,' should be printed in larger type on the page of the Gospel. It is the center and the pivot of the whole story. Everything has led up to this from the opening verse. This is the summit, the mountain of transfiguration, and from this point we shall observe that the whole tone of Christ's speech changes. He leads his disciples down from the summit into the valley of shadows and death." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

30. **And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.** The people, as the reports of the disciples had just shown, were not ready to acclaim Jesus as the Messiah, nor were the disciples sufficiently strong in the faith to teach them that great truth. After Christ's death and resurrection his Messiahship had many witnesses and advocates. Until then, to proclaim it would only hasten his death.

TESTIFYING FOR JESUS. "No one generation of men ever has given, or ever will give, the final, exhaustive definition of Christ. His personality is too great. One cannot define God." — *Rev. S. D. McConnell, D.D.* Therefore the testimony of a past generation never suffices the present, but the Christians of every century and decade must bear their living, ever-changing, ever-growing testimony.

Our testimony regarding Jesus is entirely different from the tribute we pay to any other being. "When you study Jesus Christ in Scripture, one impression

31. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

becomes overwhelming. It grows upon you that he stands alone, in incommunicable, solitary grandeur. The one thing you can never do with Christ is to regard him as belonging to a class. The one thing that is utterly incredible is that of him there should be less or more. . . . The matter was never more beautifully put than in that exquisite story about Charles Lamb. You remember how Lamb and his friends one evening were talking about people they would like to have met. And one said he would like to have met Chaucer, and another brought up the name of Sir Thomas Browne. And at length that sacred name was mentioned — the name which is above every name. And there was a pause, and then Lamb said, in his slow, gentle, stammering way, 'If Shakespeare came into the room we should all stand up, but if *He* came in we should all kneel.' " — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"In the 'Confessions of St. Augustine' he relates a story of Victorinus, an eminent man at Rome, who had won the respect of a large number of his countrymen, among whom were many heathen. When the Spirit of God dawned upon his heart, and the light of Christ therein shone, he went direct to one of his friends and told him that he was a Christian. The friend replied, 'I will never believe it until I see you openly profess your new faith in church.' Mark 8 : 38 came to him with such force that he boldly and openly confessed Christ as his Saviour." — *C. W. Bibb.*

"I am a Christian because I am eager to express my personal loyalty to Jesus. He saved me, I shall never forget that. But my Christianity is no unwilling loyalty in gratitude for a past accomplishment. I love the church, but my Christianity is no passport into a comparatively desirable set. I am proud of my faith, for it is only another way of saying that Jesus is my present Master and my allegiance to him is an unfeigned and exultant pledge. For me, he has shown the way of life. All that I know about successful living I owe to him." — *Rev. Bernard C. Clausen, D.D.*

"The Roman would not deny his allegiance to the imperial eagle which he defended ; and in our day it would be regarded as baseness for a man to repudiate the mother who bore him, the country that sheltered him, or the college that educated him. Much more base is it for a soul which has accepted Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King, which has found in him a glory greater than ever circled the ancient seven-hilled city, and received from him favors which excel in grandeur all that parents, country, or school can confer, to be ashamed of him or of his cause." — *George C. Lorimer.*

"Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
May evening blush to own a star.
Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Might midnight blush to think of noon —
'Twas midnight with my soul till He,
Bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee." — *Joseph Grigg.*

II. PETER REBUKED, Mark 8 : 31—33. How poorly prepared the apostles were to announce the Messiahship of Jesus and defend that announcement was at once made evident when even Peter, who had been most prompt to recognize the great truth and ready to state it, showed himself, as the following verses disclose, wholly apart from his Master's clear insight into the death he must die and the necessity for the cross.

31. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things. How came Jesus to be so certain of his coming sorrows and agonies ? "Was it that from childhood he had been aware of a clash between his ideals and those of every one he met, making him feel misunderstood at home, lonely among his companions, isolated in the midst of the group of men who came closest to him, and out of sympathy with the hopes and plans of the most earnest in Israel ; so that in all the thoughts and aspirations of his day he had not where to lay his head ? Was it through his familiarity with the fate of God's messengers before him — a destiny brought home to him most keenly in the murder of his friend, John the Baptist ? Was it from his penetration into the profoundest principles of the universe, and his discovery that suffering enters into the divine law of the whole creation, where all life is born of pain and death ? Was it a deeper insight than that of his contemporaries into certain messages of the Hebrew Scriptures which convinced him that God's Messiah must be a sufferer for his people, 'wounded for their transgressions and

32. And he spake the saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

bruised for their iniquities?' — *Rev. Henry Sloane Coffin, D.D.* And be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes. These were the three classes from which representatives were chosen to make up the Sanhedrin, the ruling body among the Jews. There were seventy members, not counting the high priest, who presided. The elders were heads of the families or clans; the chief priests were heads of the "courses" of priests who served in turn in the temple, together with all who had served as high priests; the scribes were recorders and teachers of the Jewish law. It was this body which must condemn Jesus, though only the Romans could actually put him to death. And be killed. Christ knew that he would not be stoned to death, which was the Jewish mode of execution, but be killed in the even more barbaric and torturing Roman fashion, the slow and horribly painful death of crucifixion. And after three days rise again. "The cross made the resurrection a necessity. If Christ did not rise, his death was defeat, and our preaching vain. Calvary was not an atonement, but an execution. But if Christ arose, then Christ died as a sacrifice and not as a victim, and every soul that trusts in him is saved." — *Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.*

32. And he spake the saying openly. Heretofore he had been trying to prepare the disciples' minds for the awful truth by giving them hints of it from time to time; now he discussed it fully and freely, for the time of his departure was drawing near. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. Peter took Christ aside, as if hesitating to rebuke his Lord before the others. And yet what colossal effrontery and conceit to rebuke One whom Peter had a minute before declared to be the Christ of God! But to Peter it seemed that our Lord had been talking nonsense, since how could God be crucified? And also he seemed to Peter to be negating and nullifying Peter's own confession of Christ as the Messiah, since how could the world's Redeemer accomplish his design if he died on the cross? Peter's was the same perplexity that has assailed many thinkers ever since that day.

33. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter. Our Lord saw that the other disciples were listening, and he could not let Peter's words pass without notice, for to do so would mislead all the Twelve. Peter, dictating to Mark, modestly omitted Christ's praise of himself, as we have seen, but in his humility he did not fail to have Mark set down the rebuke he received so soon after that exalted honor. And saith, Get thee behind me, Satan. Thus Christ had spoken to the devil when he tempted him in the wilderness, Matt. 4 : 10. Peter, indeed, was using the devil's argument, and was seeking to get Christ to adopt the easy ways of worldly compliance rather than the heroic and fearfully difficult ways of divine truth, of other-worldliness. For thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men. Peter's mind was still worldly. It was still bent upon popularity with men more than on doing the will of God. And as the mind goes, so goes the life.

WORLDLY AND HEAVENLY VIEWPOINTS. "When I look around this old world I see it is just the world for me, and about the first thing I'm going to look into is: What sort of title can I get to it? Do you know that a man may count down his soul for the world and in fifteen hours after he has made the trade Death will come along with a writ of ejectment and say: 'Off these premises! Get off forever!' And the poor fellow will pull out his deed, but Death is blind and can't see to read it, and the poor fellow will say: 'I have counted down my all for this piece of property,' but Death can't hear a word you say!" — *Sam Jones.*

"To act from your lower nature instead of your higher is vulgar. To act as an animal while you are a man is vulgar. Always and everywhere you are bound to act with all the feelings and with all the carriage of a son of God." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

"There is a suffering which the good alone can know. There is a furnace which is only heated for the man of God." — *George Matheson.*

"No man is saved who has not a fellowship with Christ's sufferings, a share in his struggles, a partnership with him in bringing men by love into the new covenant of complete oneness of heart with God." — *Rev. Henry Sloane Coffin, D.D.*

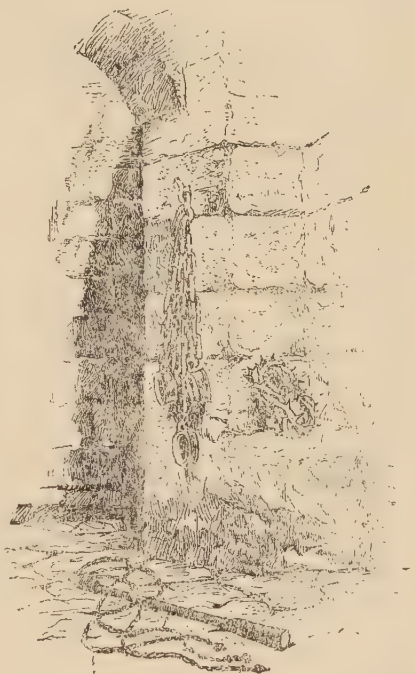
34. And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it.

III. CROSS-BEARING, Mark 8:34-38; 9:1, 30-32; 10:32-34. Aroused by this momentous occasion and by the conversation that had preceded, and feeling the time to be ripe, the Teacher spoke some of his most searching sayings, words that reach to the very depths of the human heart and that have profoundly influenced the course of Christian history.

34. And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples. They had gone to that lonely spot for rest and for quiet talks, but "he could not be hid," and evidently the people had found him out and gathered around him, though considerably keeping at some distance from the little group. And said unto them, **If any man would come after me.** That is, is determined to become one of my followers. The multitude showed a deep interest in him, or they would not thus have sought him out in that solitary place. If any of them was resolved upon a definite commitment to him, Christ would show them what it involved. **Let him deny himself.** Not cease to think about himself, his progress in all right ways, his proper pleasures and his natural interests; Christ was no ascetic and would not have his followers ascetic. But the Christian is to condemn his selfishness, forswear self-seeking, live for his higher self and not his lower self. And take up his cross, "Daily," Luke adds. "The meaning of taking up the cross is, to be ready for suffering. One who was to endure the dreadful pains of crucifixion was compelled to receive the instrument of his punishment, and to carry it, or a part of it, upon his shoulders, from the place of judgment or imprisonment to the place of execution. So our Saviour bore his cross, till, when he was probably too weary to sustain longer so heavy a burden, it was laid upon Simon of Cyrene. That a man should take up the cross of another person would be but a toilsome labor; that he should take up his own would be the sign that he deemed himself about to suffer upon it. To take it up willingly and without constraint would be to declare himself ready to suffer. This meaning would have belonged to the phrase even if our Saviour had not died, or had died by some other instrument. But since the crucifixion of the Lord of glory, the cross has been a consecrated name." — *Bishop George Burgess.* And follow me. "And thus follow me," for "Christ pleased not himself," and Christ trod the way of the cross.

35. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it. It is recorded that Christ uttered this saying four times: here (and see also Matt. 16:25 and Luke 9:24), also in Matt. 10:39; Luke 17:33; John 12:25. A truth which he taught with so much emphasis must not be neglected by his followers. "Life" is here used in two different senses: "Whoever seeks to preserve life in the lower sense, physical gratification, temporal ambitions, shall lose life in the higher sense, eternal life." And whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. Here again "life" is used in the same two senses: "Whoever shall lose his lower, physical,



Fetters, Scourge, and Crown of Thorns.

36. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?

37. For what should a man give in exchange for his life?

worldly life, in whole or in part, for the sake of Christ and the good news of salvation which Christ came to bring to men, shall save his higher, lasting, glorious life." Most of the disciples then listening to the Master proved in their experience the full truth of this saying.

36. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? "The whole world" is the same as the lower life; it is transient, unsatisfying, empty. If to gain that bubble one gives up the higher life, the only permanent thing he has, the source of the only abiding joy, what gain has one made? rather, what unutterable loss!

37. For what should a man give in exchange for his life? His higher life, his eternal life, his only real life. When all gold has crumbled to dust, when all worlds have vanished, that life will be still youthful, still happy and beautiful, and growing ever stronger in wisdom, love, and service. Who can set a price upon that priceless thing? What infinite folly to bargain it away!

Jesus closed his discourse with a warning against being "ashamed" of him and his words, even though they were to be associated forever with the disgrace of the cross. Would they be ashamed of him when he should come back from heaven in clouds of glory attended by the hosts of angels? Rather would he be ashamed of them in that day, to their endless confusion and despair.

The Lesson Committee adds to the lesson two other occasions when our Lord made the same solemn prediction of his death on the cross, followed by his resurrection: first, on his way back through Galilee to Capernaum after the transfiguration (Mark 9 : 30-32); and second, on his last journey to Jerusalem (Mark 10 : 32-34). It would seem that the disciples must have been prepared for the tragic culmination of their Master's life, and yet they were not.

LOSING LIFE AND SAVING IT. "Men really intend to secure both this world and salvation. But in attempting to get the world, they lose their souls. God told them they would, but they did not believe him." — *Charles G. Finney*.

"The Jewish ideal of life consisted in obedience and exclusions. It failed because it lacked universality and had no educating power. The Greek ideal of life was the search for wisdom. It also failed because it lacked universality, appealing to the few rather than the many. The Roman ideal of life was strength of will and courage. It, too, lacked universality. It was not the ideal of women — of half the human race. It failed also for lack of a lofty aim: to be strong without an object for the strength is not the loftiest. The Christian ideal is service in the kingdom of God, and this ideal embraces all that is best in all pre-existing ideals." — *Condensed from Rev. J. M. Wilson*.

"To think that you are to live forever! No one can imagine what *eternity* is. One old legend tells us that, if we would try to get an idea of it, we must imagine a small yoke, just large enough for a turtle's head, floating on the great ocean. The turtle comes up to the surface once in a million years. When at length, after trying and trying again, for almost innumerable times, he happens to have arisen so as to put his neck through the yoke, eternity will have just begun. You are to live while God lives." — *Charles Loring Brace*.

LESSON II (15). — April 8.

THE RESURRECTION (EASTER LESSON). — Mark 16 : 1-20.

PRINT vs. 1-8, 19, 20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Because I live, ye shall live also.* — JOHN 14 : 19.

Devotional Reading : 1 Cor. 15 : 20-26.

Primary Topic : JESUS COMES TO LIFE AGAIN.

Lesson Material : Mark 16 : 1-8, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : He is risen, even as he said. Matt. 28 : 6.

Junior Topic : CHRIST RISES FROM THE GRAVE.

Lesson Material : Mark 16 : 1-8, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : The Lord is risen indeed. Luke 24 : 34.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS OUR LIVING LEADER.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be interested in learning why we celebrate Easter. So teach them the wonderful story as to make death seem only the entrance into a new and beautiful life. Use lilies cut from white paper as the lesson symbol, and write on each a question on the lesson. After you have gone over the lesson story have the pupils draw these lilies from a vase or a flower basket, read the questions aloud, and answer them.

The Older Classes will make this lesson a study of the great Christian doctrine of immortality. Some member of the class may investigate the arguments in opposition to the doctrine advanced by infidels, while another member, working with him, prepares answers to these arguments.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Why is the trend of present-day thinking especially favorable to belief in the immortality of the soul ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The resurrection, Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30. The ascension, Thursday, May 18, A.D. 30.

Place. — The new tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa, near Calvary, outside the Damascus Gate in the north wall of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives, near Bethany.

1. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Măg-dă-lē'-nē, and Mary the mother of James, and Să-lō'-mē, brought spices, that they might come and anoint him.

I. THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB, vs. 1-8. We interrupt the orderly course of our lessons that we may observe Easter. We have already studied Christ's repeated prophecies of his crucifixion and resurrection ; in this lesson we study the fulfilment of those prophecies. It was a glorious fulfilment, bringing with it salvation for all the world that will accept it, and walk in the way of the risen Redeemer.

1. And when the Sabbath was past. The Jewish Sabbath was Saturday, the seventh day of the week. Christ was crucified and died on Friday, remained in the grave through Saturday, and rose early on Sunday morning, "on the third day" as the Jews reckoned time, counting the parts of days involved as entire days. It is not known when the church, which at first observed both Saturday and Sunday as sacred days, turned gradually and then completely from the sad day when Christ lay in the grave, and adopted as the day for Christian rest and worship the happy day when the Saviour rose from the dead. We see traces in the New Testament of the beginning of this change. The fact that it was made constitutes one of the proofs of the reality of Christ's resurrection, a very tangible and incontrovertible proof, for this great historic change could have had no other cause. **Mary Magdalene**

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Angels in the life of Christ.
The honor which Christ paid to women.
Christ's appearances during the forty days.
Proofs of Christ's resurrection.
Christ's resurrection involving ours.
Christ's last commands and how they are obeyed.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Our Living Leader.

I. THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB, vs. 1-8.

The stone rolled away.
The angel and his message.
"He is risen."

II. OTHER APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN LORD, vs. 9-18.

Mary Magdalene, the two, the eleven.
Christ's final commands.
"Into all the world."

III. CHRIST ASCENDS AND THE APOSTLES GO FORTH, vs. 19, 20.

The closing scene on Olivet.
The apostles begin their work.
The power of the resurrection.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Baring-Gould's *Village Preaching for a Year, First Series, Vol. I.* J. D. Jones's *The Gospel of the Sovereignty*. Nichols's *Sermons*. Ainsworth's *A Thornless World*. Shannon's *The Breath in the Winds*. Jefferson's *The Character of Jesus*. Trench's *Hulsean Lectures*. Hodges's *The Year of Grace: Advent to Trinity*. Banks's *Bible Soul-Winners*. Dawson's *The Divine Challenge*. Newton's *An Ambassador*.

2. And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen.

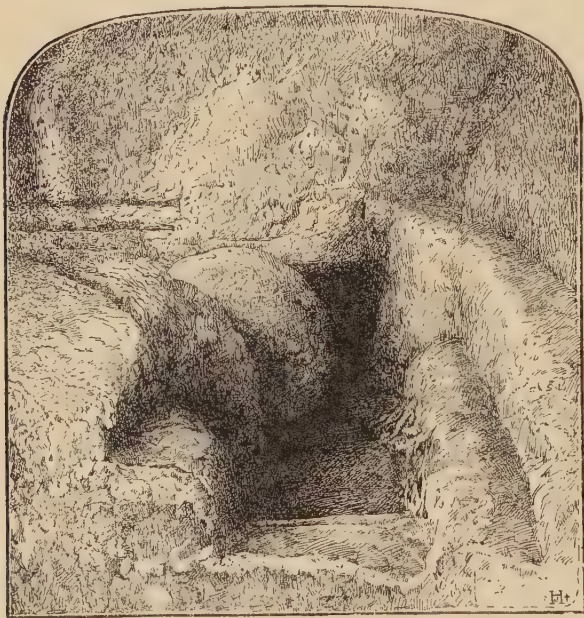
3. And they were saying among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb?

and Mary the *mother of James*, and Salome. The first, Mary of Magdala, a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, had been delivered from seven demons, and in her deep gratitude had followed Christ on his journeys, helping with gifts of money to provide for him and the Twelve. "Mary the mother of James" is the same as "Mary the mother of James the less and of Josès" mentioned in Mark 15 : 40. "The less" may refer to age or stature, and differentiates him from James the brother of John and the son of Zebedee, the first of the apostles to meet martyrdom. He was probably James the son of Alphæus (Luke 6 : 15), and his mother, Mary, may have been a sister of Mary the mother of Jesus. Salome, the wife of Zebedee (Matt. 27 : 56), the mother of James and John, may have been another sister of the Virgin Mary. **Brought spices, that they might come and anoint him.** On Friday evening, just before the Sabbath, which began at sunset on Friday, the women had prepared for the embalming of the precious body, making a hasty end of their work as the Sabbath drew near (Luke 23 : 54), whereon even such work as that might not be done. Joseph of Arimathæa, aided by Nicodemus, two members of the Sanhedrin, had laid the body reverently in Joseph's new tomb, placing around it a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes (John 19 : 38-42). But the work was evidently only temporary, and the women came to complete it. The Jews did not

practise the thorough mode of embalming used in Egypt, but merely wrapped the body in preservative spices mingled with ointments.

2. And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen. John says, "while it was yet dark," and all the evangelists give slightly different notes of time, proving their independence of one another, but all agree that it was just at dawn. Probably the women started in the dark and reached the tomb just as the first rays of dawn tinged the eastern sky.

3. And they were saying among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb? A very large round stone, rolling in a groove cut in the stone floor, closed the opening of the tomb, which was evidently a



From an Underwood stereograph.

Rolling Stone at a Door of a Sepulcher.

cave in the side of the hill, either a natural cave, such as is common in the rocks around Jerusalem, or wholly or partly artificial. The women knew that the stone was too large for all of them together to move. They would have been still more worried if they had known that the Roman authorities, acting on the request of the Jewish leaders, had sealed up the entrance to the tomb and stationed there a guard of Roman soldiers to see that no one should steal Christ's body and then pretend

4. And looking up, they see that the stone is rolled back : for it was exceeding great.

5. And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe ; and they were amazed.

6. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed : ye seek Jesus, the Nāz-ă-rēne', who hath been crucified : he is risen ; he is not here : behold, the place where they laid him !

that he had risen from the dead (Matt. 27 : 62-66). Thus Christ's enemies themselves aided in confirming the truth of his resurrection. It is Matthew also who tells us (28 : 2-4) about the great earthquake in the night, and that an angel rolled away the stone, so terrifying the guard that they fled to the chief priests, afterward taking a bribe to say that while they slept Christ's disciples came and stole the body of Jesus (Matt. 28 : 11-15). This was a palpable lie, but it is still current among the Jews, and was set forth by them in the newspapers in the very year in which this volume of Notes was written.

4. And looking up, they see that the stone is rolled back : for it was exceeding great. That is, it was so large as to be readily seen in the dim light by spectators at some distance, looking up from below. Angels had done for them what they could not do for themselves, as angels are always ready to step in and supplement the feeble powers of trusting mortals. They had had all their worry for nothing, which is uniformly the case.

5. And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side. Luke (24 : 4) speaks of *two* men. We must remember the dim light, and the confused state of the women's minds. Probably one of the two angels was much more noticeable than the other. At any rate, the narratives are much more credible thus disagreeing in a few minor points than if they were perfect duplicates, evidently copied the one from the other. The "young man" is described by Matthew as "an angel," and this is implied in Mark's description of his raiment. Arrayed in a white robe. Luke (24 : 4) tells us that his apparel was "dazzling." Matthew (28 : 3) says that "his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow." These heavenly beings are everywhere described as gloriously radiant creatures. And they were amazed. The appearance of the "young man," as we learn from the other evangelists, was what amazed them. Thus the Gospels fit into one another and explain one another.

6. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed. Matthew adds the pronoun, "Be not ye affrighted," as the Roman guards had been, about whose flight Matthew had just told. Ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, who hath been crucified. Literally, "Jesus ye seek, the Nazarene, the crucified." "Observe the objective, far-off style of description, befitting a visitor from another world." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*. He is risen. Only one word in the Greek — the most meaningful word ever written, the word in which is condensed the proof of Christ, the triumph of Christ, Christ's victory over death and sin, the confidence of all Christians, humanity's assurance of immortality. He is not here. Ye seek him in vain here, in the grave ; this is the last of all places in which



Ary Scheffer.

The Three Marys Returning from the Sepulcher.

7. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8. And they went out, and fled from the tomb ; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them : and they said nothing to any one ; for they were afraid.

to find Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. **Behold, the place where they laid him!** The grave was empty, and yet not empty : it was full of hope and cheer for Christians, of confusion for Christ's foes. "The ceremonies were there, but the body was gone. Whither? Had it been stolen and hidden? Who would have been the thieves? Friends or foes? Not friends; for how could their faith be made heroic, for their crusade against the world's unbelief, by a theft and a carcase? Not foes; for it was their interest to prevent the disappearance of the body, that there might be ocular demonstration of the falsity of the predicted resurrection. The fact of the actual resurrection of our Lord is a rock-of-ages that can never be moved." — *James Morison*.

7. **But go, tell his disciples and Peter.** Not that Peter, after his denial, had ceased to be reckoned as a disciple, except perhaps in his own despairing thought, but more as one would say, "Tell his disciples, *and especially Peter*, do not leave him out." "After his resurrection, Christ was quick and eager to bring peace to the soul of that disciple who had lived in an agony of remorse and shame ever since his denial in the judgment hall. His first message was to him, and it was a message that conveyed the assurance of pardon and abiding love." — *Rev. J. D. Jones*. **He goeth before you into Galilee.** "Before you," as if to make preparation for them. Before his crucifixion (Mark 14 : 28) Christ had appointed the rendezvous of which he now through his messenger reminds the disciples. In Galilee the risen Lord would meet far more of his followers than he could find in Judæa, where he had worked a comparatively short time. **There shall ye see him, as he said unto you.** They had already seen him in Jerusalem, but in Galilee they were to see him in a special, more intimate way, as we learn from the other evangelists. Mark's Gospel ends very abruptly, perhaps because of the death of Peter or the outbreak of the terrible persecution under Nero. Many scholars think that Mark 16 : 9-20 was added by another hand, or at least was written by Mark much later than the rest of the book. The passage is lacking in the oldest manuscripts.

8. **And they went out, and fled from the tomb.** The angel had bidden them not to fear, but they did fear nevertheless. It would be well for all of us if we should obey the heavenly commands regarding fear and worry; God knows what is to be feared and what is not. **For trembling and astonishment had come upon them.** What an opportunity they had to learn about the risen Lord, about heaven, about the conditions of the next life! But their causeless fear led them to throw their opportunity away. **And they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid.** "Nothing to no one" is the emphatic Greek idiom. They said nothing to any of their friends they met on their way back to Jerusalem, but reserved the great news for the apostles (Matt. 28 : 8). They wanted their advice as to the telling of the marvellous happening.

"**HE IS RISEN.**" "St. Paul informs us that Christ being risen from the dead is 'the first-fruits of them that slept.' He is the first-fruits because he is first in dignity, and the first in time to rise. Now that he is first in dignity is self-evident, and cannot be disputed. But it is not so clear that he was first in time. For who does not know that there were several resurrections which took place before that of Jesus Christ? Elijah and Elisha raised the dead to life again, Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son at Nain, and Lazarus. How then can Christ be called the first-fruits of them that slept, since he was not the first to rise from the dead? I will tell you. Those other resurrections were imperfect. Such as were raised, in course of time died again, and were laid in their graves, not to wake again till the last trump. But 'Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.' He rises, not again to die, but to a life immortal. Thus he is, in very truth, the first-fruits of immortal life of those that slept." — *S. Baring-Gould*.

By Christ's resurrection the stone was rolled away from the door of death, never again to be rolled back. "The riddle of death was solved, and hearts unnumbered welcomed the tidings, and expanded themselves to it, as flowers, shut through some long dreary night, unfold themselves to the warmth and light of the returning day." — *Richard Chenevix Trench*.

II. OTHER APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN LORD, vs. 9-18. MARY MAGDALENE, THE TWO, THE ELEVEN. "John Milton once said, 'It is a long way from hell up to light.' Mary Magdalene compassed all that distance in three years.

She started down in the darkness of demon possession, driven by evil spirits, the slave of their vile will, and through the infinite mercy of God in Jesus Christ she was made free from all the devils that had enslaved her, and became not only the associate of good men and women but the acknowledged friend of Him who was the holiest and most glorious specimen of manhood this world has ever seen. And when Jesus burst asunder the bands of death, the first one of all his friends to whom he appeared was Mary Magdalene." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

It is especially amazing that the first person to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection was a woman, though a woman so useful and honored as Mary Magdalene. Christianity had not yet lifted woman to her present high position in the regard of mankind, and any false narrative would have represented our Lord as appearing first in awful majesty to the Sanhedrin or to Pilate or Herod, or at any rate to Peter and James and John.

In the light of the scorn of ancient times for women this incident is one of the chief confirmations of the Gospel account of the resurrection.

"Two disciples, appalled by all that has occurred in Jerusalem, set out in the eventide for Emmaus convinced that the whole propaganda of Christianity is at an end, prepared to renounce its hope and to take up once more the dreary tasks of a commonplace and unilluminated life. As they walk and are sad they are overtaken by a stranger who talks with them in friendliest intercourse, accepts their hospitality, and is finally known to them as Jesus in the breaking of bread. Among the various incidents of the resurrection this stands alone, if one may say so. Christ nowhere appears so simply human as in this episode of Emmaus. He is the friend and comrade; he wears no aspect of awe or majesty; he speaks no words that thrill the heart with a terror of the supernatural — only warm, loving, human words, which cause the hearts of these forlorn men to burn with passionate affection." — *Rev. W. J. Dawson, D.D.*

The risen Lord's two appearances to his apostolic band, first without Thomas and then with him, are remarkable for the Saviour's readiness to afford proof. He passed mysteriously through the closed door and stood in the room, but he was glad to give evidence of his reality by eating, and even by allowing Thomas to touch his wounds if he wished.

Indeed, Jesus devoted no less than forty days to meetings with his disciples, taking them one at a time, as Mary and Peter and then James; taking them two at a time, as the disciples at Emmaus; taking them seven at a time, as to the disciples by the Sea of Galilee; taking them more than five hundred at a time on



The Risen Lord and Mary Magdalene.

Plochhorst.

19. So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

at least one occasion in Galilee; and in what other ways he showed himself we do not know, but doubtless the four Gospels do not include all the manifestations of those forty days. The appearances of the risen Redeemer were so numerous and so well attested that it never occurred to the early Christians to distrust the resurrection, but that crowning event of his life became the basis and inspiration of the preaching of all the pioneer Christian evangelists and missionaries.

CHRIST'S FINAL COMMANDS. We may be sure that during those forty days the Saviour uttered many words of instruction concerning his church which the apostles were to establish; but the command which he evidently emphasized was that they should go everywhere, "into all the world," and tell the good news of salvation to every one they might meet. They were promised miraculous power, and the promise was afterwards fulfilled in abundance. They were to use the sacred rite of baptism, and they were authorized to warn unbelievers that their denial of Christ, if persisted in, would be their doom. These commands have come down to us, and are for us as well as for the Eleven.

"**INTO ALL THE WORLD.**" As Christ's missionaries — and that includes all true Christians — go "into all the world," they are to summon all men to faith in the gospel, Christ's good news of the Father. Disbelief in this good news brings God's condemnation. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not. He walks abroad in a world which speaks to him of many things, but not of God; as a blind man makes his uncertain way around the corners of a world which speaks to him of many things, but not of light." — *Dean George Hodges.*

"If you study the New Testament, you will see that Christ from the beginning carried the world in his eye and the race on his heart. The ideas of Jesus have such breadth that they can cover the world and the ages, and although nineteen centuries have swept away almost everything which was believed and taught in Jesus' day, his ideas are still alive, and the very words in which they are expressed seem destined to outlive the stars. This is indeed strange, that we people of the twentieth century should be a part of the Nazareth congregation." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

"Will the energies of Christians never awake to this momentous subject? If the present generation do not, future generations will, attain to this honor." — *Rev. Samuel Nichols, D.D.*

Many obstacles will arise as the Christian tries to carry out Christ's final commands day by day, obstacles like the seal, the stone, the Roman guard, in the face of which the three women pressed forward in the path of duty on Easter morning. "On the eve of the battle of Waterloo, Lord Uxbridge, chief of the staff of the Duke of Wellington, was anxious to know the arrangements for the morrow, but the Duke had communicated to him nothing. He at length ventured to ask his superior what was to be done, whether they were to retreat or show fight. 'Done?' answered the Iron Duke, 'Why, beat Bonaparte.' 'But how? Do we attack, or allow the enemy to attack us?' 'Bonaparte has not communicated to me his projects, and, as my conduct must be regulated by his, how can I tell you my plans? But there is one thing we have certainly to do: beat him.' Seeing his lieutenant somewhat abashed, the Duke laid his hand on his shoulder and added, 'Come what may, Uxbridge, we shall both do our duty.'" — *S. Baring-Gould.*

III. CHRIST ASCENDS AND THE APOSTLES GO FORTH, vs. 19, 20. "The story ends with a brief notice of the ascension of the Lord Jesus on the one hand, and of the apostolic activity of the Eleven on the other. Luke, who means to tell the story of the acts of the apostles at length, contents himself with reporting that the Eleven returned from Bethany, his scene of parting, to Jerusalem, not with sadness but with joy, there to worship and wait." — *Prof. A. B. Bruce.*

19. So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them. "Spoken" is in the Greek a word signifying extended instruction; the phrase includes all of our Lord's teaching through the forty days between his resurrection and his ascension. **Was received up into heaven.** He took the disciples up the Mount of Olives "over against Bethany," giving them on the way precious final instructions, and there, in the act of blessing them with uplifted hands, "he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven" (Luke 24: 50-53). Thus simply but majestically and beautifully, was Christ's life on earth concluded. **And sat down at the right hand of God.** In the position of highest honor and deepest favor, ready to inter-

20. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.

cede with the Infinite Judge for the sinful people whom he has redeemed. We have always an Advocate at the right hand of God.

20. **And they went forth.** They did not go forth from Jerusalem at once, but, obeying Christ's command, tarried there until the day of Pentecost, ten days after the ascension, when the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon them, and with him the power and wisdom in which alone they could go forth for the winning of men to the Saviour. **And preached everywhere.** Not literally, of course, for to-day, after nearly two thousand years, there are wide reaches of the earth that have not yet heard Christian preaching; but they spread the good news as far as they could, and told it everywhere they went. "St. Mark himself when he wrote his Gospel had witnessed the spread of the church from Babylon in the distant East to the City of the Seven Hills in the West." — *Cambridge Bible*. **The Lord working with them.** Literally, "the Lord co-operating," for he had promised to be with them through all time, even to the end of the world (Matt. 28 : 20), a blessed promise of which every working Christian constantly reminds himself with joy. **And confirming the word by the signs that followed.** "Followed *closely*" is the more exact meaning of the Greek. Christ did not leave this earth in order to pass to a state of inactivity, but he kept right on working with and for men, and even more vigorously, we may be sure, than when he was cumbered by the flesh. He enabled his preaching disciples to work miracles, and he still enables all who labor in his vineyard to do wonderful things in confirmation of their Christian faith and teaching. Amen. "Verily," "So be it," the token of completion and of satisfaction. "It is finished" said Christ on the cross. In the same sense "It is finished" stands at the close of Mark's Gospel.

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION. "What," it may be asked, "has Christ's resurrection to do with us? Of course he, being God, could not be held in the grave; but we, being mortal, may well be retained there forever." No; for in Christ's resurrection lies the power of our resurrection. He has said it: "I am the resurrection and the life," he declared; and "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14 : 19). Paul was willing to suffer all things that he might know Christ, "and the power of his resurrection" (Phil. 3 : 10). As we come to know Christ more perfectly we have the blessed assurance that his resurrection is ours also.

"Some find the risen Christ as the Magdalene, who found him suddenly when he named her name. Some find him in the doing of his will, as the disciples who cast the net in Tiberias, and found it was their Master and Lord they were obeying. Some go the journey to Emmaus — the way of many a heart-burning, many a meditation, many a mind and spirit struggle — and find him in the breaking of bread. At the core of all Christian experience there lies the same eternal truth, for it is the same Christ who meets us all; but many are the forms that experience can take. Therefore, let not the man who has met the Master in the garden of Joseph doubt that he was ever seen on the shore of Tiberias; and let not him who hath found him on that dawn-lit beach think it improbable that he ever walked and talked with the traveller to Emmaus." — *Rev. Percy C. Ainsworth*.

"In the light of our Lord's tomb, we may learn that the tomb is the birthplace of unaging youth. 'And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man.' Just as if one of the golden lads living up among the Eternal Hills had come down into an earthly grave and said, 'I am a specimen of the citizens of the Invisible Lifeland. The oldest of our folks are the youngest. Youth is contagious in our country. I never saw an old person there.'" — *Rev. Frederick F. Shannon, D.D.*

LESSON III (16). — April 15.

TRANSFIGURATION AND SERVICE. — Mark 9 : 2-29.

PRINT vs. 2-8, 17, 18, 25-29.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing.* — JOHN 15 : 5.

Devotional Reading : John 15 : 1-8.

Primary Topic : JESUS SHOWS HIS GLORY.

Lesson Material : Mark 9 : 2-8.

Memory Verse : And we beheld his glory. John 1 : 14 a.

Junior Topic : JESUS SHOWS HIS GLORY.

Lesson Material : Mark 9 : 2-8.

Memory Verse : And we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father. John 1 : 14.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : WHAT FAITH AND PRAYER CAN DO.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE MEANING OF THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will enjoy both halves of the lesson, the wonderfully picturesque account of the transfiguration and the story of the poor little lad who was healed of his terrible disease. Make the first part of the lesson practical by telling the boys and girls how goodness and kindness glorify a life and beautify the face, transfiguring one's entire appearance. Make the second part of the lesson practical by telling of the present-day work of the devils in the lives of boys and girls, such as the demon of lying or the demon of laziness, and how Christ can drive it out.

The Older Classes will emphasize the evidence the lesson gives us as to Christ's deity and also its proofs of the reality and glory of the next life. Discuss the ways in which we may live the transfigured life, especially by healing the world's diseases and driving away the demons that afflict the world. Thus you will unite the two halves of the lesson.

*** Question Suggested for Discussion :**
What present-day proofs have we of the existence of devils ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The transfiguration occurred in the summer of A.D. 29, the third year of Christ's ministry.

Place. — On one of the ridges radiating from Mt. Hermon, and also at the foot of the ridge.

2. And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves : and he was transfigured before them ;

I. THE TRANSFIGURATION : FOOD FOR FAITH, vs. 2-13. Having celebrated the festival that of all anniversaries is most blessed and joyous to the Christian heart, we return to the order of events in Christ's life, and take up the history where we dropped it. Our Lord and his disciples had gone to the most northern limit of Palestine, the region of Cæsarea Philippi, and there we find them in to-day's lesson. We are to study the event which, of all the happenings of Christ's life save only the resurrection, must have seemed to the disciples the most surprising, and the clearest evidence of his deity.

2. And after six days. This was six days after Peter's bold and complete acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God, the prophesied Messiah, the Saviour of the

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

A description of Mt. Hermon.
Transfiguration scenes in the Bible.
Moses and Elijah with reference to Christ.
The purpose of Christ's transfiguration.
Different types of demon-possession.
How the Bible links mountain experiences and plain experiences.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Christ's Transfiguration and Its Meaning for Us.

I. THE TRANSFIGURATION : FOOD FOR FAITH, vs. 2-13.

A wonderful experience.
A saddening prophecy.
Transfigured lives.

II. THE DEMON-POSSESSED BOY : A TEST OF FAITH, vs. 14-29.

All things possible to belief.
"I believe; help thou mine unbelief."
What faith and prayer can do.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hill's *Mountain Peaks in the Life of Our Lord*.
Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Jesus*.
Morgan's *The Crises of the Christ*.
Evans's *Epochs in the Life of Christ*.
The *Miracle on Hermon*, by John Marvin Dean, is a beautiful story of a transfiguration scene on Mt. Hermon.
Banks's *Dramatic Stories of Jesus* tells the story of our lesson.
Barry's *The Transfiguration of Our Lord*.
Dodd's *The Prayer Life of Jesus*.
Gunsaulus's *The Transfiguration of Christ*.
Cox's *The Genesis of Evil*.
Davidson's *Waiting upon God*.
Hutton's *The Fear of Things*.
Dods's *How to Become Like Christ*.
Whitton's *The Law of Liberty*.
Alford's *Fireside Homilies*.
Price Collier's *Sermons*.
Maurice's *Sermons Preached in Country Churches*.

3. And his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them.

world. That great confession was a fit prelude to the disclosure of Christ's deity in the wonderful event we are to study. Confession precedes illumination. **Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John.** "Peter who loved Jesus so much, John whom Jesus loved so much, James who first of the apostles was to bear witness in martyrdom to his love for the Lord."

These three were the inner circle of the Twelve, those closest to Jesus, the three who, with the exception of Paul, were to lead all Christians in the service of the Saviour. They had been singled out to witness the raising of the daughter of Jairus from the dead, and they alone were to share Christ's anguished vigil in Gethsemane. **And bringeth them up into a high mountain.** There are many mountains near Cæsarea Philippi, and this was probably a spur of Palestine's loftiest eminence, the great snow-crowned Mt. Hermon, which can be seen from all parts of the Holy Land. It rises over 9,000 feet. **Apart by themselves.**

"St. Luke (9 : 28) tells us that one object of Christ's own withdrawal was that he might engage in solitary prayer. We may infer, therefore (comparing Luke 9 : 37), that evening was the time of this solitary retirement. The fact that it was night must have infinitely enhanced the grandeur of the scene." — *Cambridge Bible.* **And he was transfigured before them.** The descriptions of this wondrous occurrence given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke are varying, almost despairing, attempts to paint in words what language could not portray. Moved by his close communion with his Father, and as he was praying, the inner glory of Christ burst through the human body which ordinarily hid it from men's eyes, and shone out with a dazzling radiance. His form was bathed in light. His countenance was transformed by the splendor, as if a hindering mask had been thrown off. It was the majestic flames of deity, the Sun of Righteousness disclosing itself, a brightness which the eye of man can scarcely bare to gaze upon.

"Many have studied this as a unique chapter in Christ's history, supposing it the only time when his inward glory shone through the veil of flesh, or heavenly inhabitants came to visit him. The supposition is unwarranted. Many a night of Christ's life was spent in prayer where no human watcher was present to note what happened. Very possibly on those nights, too, there was a transfiguration as he prayed; the saints or angels may have talked with him, or the Father may have spoken to the Son. We know that his prayer at the baptism and in Passion Week received an answer in articulate words; we are told of angelic ministrations at the close of the struggle in the Wilderness and at Gethsemane; and the cowering of the soldiers when he went forth to them from the hour of prayer in the Garden seems to hint that his face then wore a supernal splendor somewhat like that which the disciples saw on the Mount." — *Rev. William Bancroft Hill, D.D., Litt.D.*

3. And his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. He was clothed with light as with a garment (Ps. 104 : 2; Hab. 3 : 4). His robe was white as the snow of Hermon. No earthly art could so whiten cloth. Thus the angels at Christ's tomb were clad in dazzling white (Luke 24 : 4; John 20 : 12). It is the raiment of heaven.



From a photograph by Wilson Booths.

Mountains of Cæsarea Philippi in the distance.

4. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5. And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

6. For he knew not what to answer; for they became sore afraid.

4. **And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses.** Moses, the representative of the sacred Law; Elijah, the representative of prophecy. Moses, buried by Jehovah himself, and with his grave forever unknown; Elijah, carried to heaven in a chariot of fire with steeds of flame. Their presence binds together the Old and New



The Transfiguration.

Raphael.

Testaments. It was Jesus of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets all wrote. Their presence, moreover, proves the immortality of the soul, that it endures forever beyond the grave. It proves in addition the continuance of personality, that there is recognition in heaven, that we shall instantly know our beloved ones when we meet them there. **And they were talking with Jesus.** They spoke of the death he was to die at Jerusalem, his coming departure ("exodus") from this world, the all-important matter which Christ had vainly tried to lay upon the souls of his disciples. "They at least understood, and Christ's heart was comforted at this dread hour. No doubt the Father graciously sent Moses and Elijah to console the spirit of Christ in this time of darkness. In the strength of this meat he could go on steadily to the cross. We do not know the words that were said, but they were words of comfort beyond a doubt." — *Prof. A. T. Robertson*. "If the Man Christ Jesus could be strengthened by an angel out of heaven, why should he not be both strengthened and comforted by 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' of men gifted and honored as Moses and Elijah had been and were?" — *Samuel Cox*.

5. **And Peter answereth and saith to Jesus.** Peter's "answer" was not a reply to anything that had been said, but was rather a response, though a blundering one, to the entire situation. The heavenly visitors were departing (Luke 9 : 33), and Peter was eager to prolong their stay. **Rabbi, it is good for us to be here.** No hostile critics were present, no scheming Pharisees and scribes, no jealous officials fearing Christ's popularity. It was peaceful there, a holy place, a sanctuary for the highest fellowship, the most exalted communion. Thus often Christians are content with the church "services," and find in them so sweet a ministry to their souls that they are reluctant to leave them for difficult services out in the world. Truly it is good for us to engage in spiritual communion, but only to gain strength and wisdom for doing as Jesus did, going out among men to help and bless. **And let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.** The "tabernacles" were booths made of twisted boughs, such as the pilgrims to Jerusalem made at the Feast of Tabernacles. "Jesus might have smiled at Peter's idea of building three log cabins on Mt. Hermon to house three such citizens of the universe as Moses and Elijah and himself, with the cross, the axle on which all human history was to turn, looming yonder on Mount Calvary." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.* Peter may have had a vague feeling that the time had come for the visible establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth, with Mt. Hermon as the capital, and Moses and Elijah as the chief ministers of the King. He would make a beginning of the new and permanent and blessed order of human affairs.

6. **For he knew not what to answer; for they became sore afraid.** Peter and James and John had been asleep, as they were in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 9 : 32). They had been awakened by the brightness of the Saviour's glory, and they were "fully awake," as Luke takes pains to tell us, but they were confused by

7. And there came a cloud overshadowing them : and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son : hear ye him.

8. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

the suddenness of their plunge into marvels, and Peter hardly knew what he was saying.

7. **And there came a cloud overshadowing them.** It was not a dark cloud, but a bright one (Matt. 17 : 5) which hung over them and illuminated the scene with sudden dazzling radiance. "The bright cloud is the constant vehicle of the Divine Presence, veiling the more intolerable brightness of God, yet revealing all that man on earth can bear to see." — *Rev. George Duncan Barry*. **And there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son : hear ye him.** Matt. 17 : 5 gives the words more fully : "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He also says that when the disciples heard this voice from heaven, they fell on their faces in their terror and awe. "This is my Son, my chosen," is the wording given by Luke. The thought is the same in the three versions, and the slightly different form is proof of the evangelists' independence. Once before, at his baptism (Matt. 3 : 17 ; Mark 1 : 11 ; Luke 3 : 22), the voice came from heaven speaking the same word with regard to the Father's love for the Son ; but at that time the words were addressed solely to Christ, and were for his encouragement. Again, just before Christ's arrest and death (John 12 : 28), the same great voice came out of heaven ; but this time also the words were addressed to Jesus, though for the sake of the apostles (John 12 : 30). Here, however, the heavenly witness was given to the Son in order that the apostles might listen to him as God's vice-regent, and give him even more heed than they would have given to Moses and Elijah if they had remained on earth with them.

8. **And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.** "If the presence of Moses and Elijah meant much, their passing was also full of significance. A cloud of glory overshadowed and removed them, and in their removal taught the completion of their work in him. There was now no need for Moses, nor yet for Elijah. All that the Mosaic economy foreshadowed found its substance in him, and Moses may pass back to the rest of the Father's house. All that Elijah had heroically said in the midst of much opposition, with faltering and even failure, Christ is now to say with absolute certainty, and never failing, and Elijah may pass back to the celestial spaces, to wait the consummation of the work of Jesus." — *Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D.*

A SADDENING PROPHECY. The little band seems to have descended to the plain soon after the departure of Moses and Elijah, and on the way the Lord, as he had so often before required silence concerning his miracles and his Messiahship, so now he charged Peter and James and John not to reveal the transfiguration which they had witnessed until he should rise from the dead, for to disclose the wonderful event would merely hasten his crucifixion. It was not for immediate announcement, but was intended to strengthen the faith of the three apostles, and give them cheer in the dark days so soon to come.

The three obeyed the Master, but could not refrain from discussing the matter among themselves, and especially the woful prophecy that Christ was to die. It seemed inconceivable : how could he, the Life of men, he who had raised others from death, how could he be brought himself under death's thrall ? They did not dare question him about it, but ventured on a question regarding the coming of Elijah, whom they had just seen. Did not the scribes say that Elijah must appear on earth before the advent of the Messiah ? Was the appearance they had just witnessed a fulfilment of that ancient prophecy ? Christ answered by telling them that Elijah had indeed come already, and that the evil world had worked its wicked will upon him, referring to the murdered John the Baptist. But as the persecution of that "Elijah" had been foretold, so the Book foretold the sufferings of the Messiah, and they should be prepared for the accomplishment of prophecy in the one case as it had been accomplished in the other. But we may be sure that these words had little effect in convincing the apostles that the Lord's death was actually close at hand.

TRANSFIGURED LIVES. "The cross is the center of the transfiguration scene. In the basilica at Ravenna there is a mosaic of the sixth century, representing in emblematical form the transfiguration of Christ. A jewelled cross set in the midst of a circle of blue, studded with golden stars, is presented to the eye of the observer.

In the midst of the scene appears the cross of Christ, the Saviour of the world, while from the cloud close by is thrust forth a divine hand that points to the cross. This indicates that the cross was, in the mind of the artist, the center of the transfiguration scene. Those early artists were right in their reading of this divine event. To the disciples of the earth, the cross may seem an offence, an ignominy, and a shame ; but to the inhabitants of heaven, it is no infamy, no disgrace, but a glory and an honor." — *Dean William Evans, Ph.D., D.D.* When the cross becomes central in any life, that life is gloriously transfigured.

"Jesus saw that he must die. Now, for the last time, he put aside all his hesitations, and as he prays, he yields himself to the will of the Father. . . . It was at the moment of his yielding all to God that Jesus attained his highest glory. Man's life is transformed when he allows God's will to fill it and shine through it ; his person is transformed when he divests himself of self-will, and allows God wholly to possess it." — *Marcus Dods.*

When we have once seen the Lord in his glory, the vision becomes a permanent influence in our lives, glorifying us and growing in us, "from glory to glory." "Many years after, one of the three had occasion to write (2 Pet. 1 : 16) of the truth and genuineness of the testimony which he and his colleagues had borne to his divine Lord. It was no clever fable, he said, which they had followed ; they had seen his majesty with their own eyes — they had heard the voice from the Excellent Glory bear witness to him." — *Henry Alford.*

"What present sympathy have we with this heavenly fellowship of thought and hope of which we have had a glimpse on the holy mount ? Is the main interest of our present life the same as theirs — the advancement of the kingdom of God, the accomplishment of the world's deliverance from the sin and evil under which it groans ? Or is it an alien interest, a lower interest — our self-aggrandizement only, in personal profits and pleasures ? On this it depends whether our future fellowship be glorious or inglorious — with the covetous, the selfish, the ungodly, or with Moses and Elijah, with Peter and Paul, with Him who is the Divine Center and Bond of all those, in all ages and in both worlds, whose hopes of blessedness are bound up with the triumph of Truth and Righteousness and Love in a perfected humanity, in a regenerated world." — *James M. Whiton.*

"Christ has nothing which he does not share. No experience of his but may be ours. In the fellowship of God the fashion of his countenance became altered. And so, in the fellowship of the Father and the Son, may ours. We too shall be transfigured. Moses came back out of the cloud where he had been with God, with a light on his countenance that dazzled every eye, though he himself wist not that his face did shine. And from the same presence we too shall come out radiant with a similar light. And, like every other light, it will remove all wrinkles from our face and from our disposition." — *Prof. A. B. Davidson.*

"All that Christ was is ours. We live in him and through him. Our halting faith waits in the valleys of humiliation ; he points a significant finger to the heights of glory, and says, 'Follow me.' When the flash dazzles us, and the scene bewilders our souls yet half-asleep, we grow faithless ; yet we must follow. Our faith in ourselves is astonished when he says to his Father, 'The glory which thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them' (John 17 : 22). Life is transfigured. But he who receives the Transfigured and Transfiguring Christ has within him a force that never rests. 'Christ' is 'formed within, the hope of glory.'" — *F. W. Gunsauls.*

II. THE DEMON-POSSESSED BOY : A TEST OF FAITH, vs. 14-29. ALL THINGS POSSIBLE TO BELIEF. Arrived at the foot of the mount, Christ and the three disciples found a scene of conflict, as different as possible from the peace which they had left on the summit. The other apostles were there, confronted by the hostile scribes, who had penetrated even to that far northern spot, and who were perhaps taunting the apostles with their inability to perform a miracle, or were bringing some criticism to bear on Christ and his work. A large crowd had collected, for nothing will gather a throng more quickly than a dispute of any kind. When the people saw Christ they were greatly amazed, perhaps by his opportune appearance when thought to be so far away, perhaps by some remnant of the glory which he had shown on the mountain still radiant in his face as in the face of Moses when he came from converse with Jehovah (Ex. 34 : 30). Immediately, at sight of him, the crowd ran to meet him, and saluted him with every token of respect and of joy ; whereupon at once he asked them what had been the subject of their discussion.

17. And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit;

18. And wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down : and he foameth, and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away : and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out ; and they were not able.

25. And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

17. And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit. It was an especially sad case, since the boy was the father's only child (Luke 9 : 38). He was dumb in the sense that he could not speak words, but he could utter inarticulate cries (Luke 9 : 39). We learn from Matt. 17 : 15 that the poor fellow suffered from epilepsy, and when Christ bade the demon who was causing his suffering to leave him he called him a "dumb and deaf spirit" (Mark 9 : 25) — a malady especially difficult to cure because the victim could neither hear the words of the Healer, nor beg relief from him.

18. And wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down. These seizures were sadly frequent (v. 22). At the onset of an epileptic fit the sufferer emits a loud, sharp cry, and immediately afterward falls on the ground, where he flings himself about in his agony. And he foameth and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away. Foaming at the mouth and gnashing the teeth are further symptoms of epileptic seizures, and under their harrowing and repeated onsets the body of the sick man wastes away to a mere skeleton. And I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out. Christ had given the disciples power to heal diseases and cast out demons (Mark 6 : 13), and this father may have seen them using this power with marvellous results. In his humility he would rather approach the disciples than their Master. And they were not able. Christ's rebuke of the disciples implies that they had the power to heal, but had not developed it by faith and prayer and fasting ; they were not able just because they were not enough in earnest.

"I BELIEVE ; HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF." Christ's sad exclamation, "O faithless generation !" shows that he is rebuking for their lack of faith not only the apostles but the friends of the sick boy and all the bystanders. The entire nation was lacking in faith. The spirit of the times in Greece and Rome as well as in Palestine was a spirit of doubt and unbelief. Indeed, it may well be questioned whether, after nearly two thousand years of Christianity, our own generation could fairly be called a generation of faith.

As soon as the demon in the boy perceived the presence of the Saviour and felt his powerful purpose, it made a final fiendish effort, and threw its wretched victim to the ground in a terrible spasm. "How long has he been thus ?" asked the pitying Physician and learned that the lad had been subject to these terrible seizures from childhood, and that the demon had often cast him into the fire and often into the water to destroy him in its fierce malice. "If thou canst do anything," the distracted father begged, "have compassion on us, and help us." He should not have introduced the "if," and the Omnipotent One at once quoted it, reprovingly : "If thou canst !" "All things," said Jesus in an immortal sentence, "all things are possible to him that believeth." He did not mean, of course, that even the strongest faith could cause God to do anything wrong, or anything that would prove harmful to his children ; but he meant, with all his heart, that a believer can, in God's strength, do anything that is in accordance with God's will ; and no one in his senses would want to do anything contrary to God's will.

Immediately the father of the boy made a great answer, an answer that has come shouting down the centuries, a clarion call to a confident faith as well as a humble appeal to the Source of all power : "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." For no human faith is perfect ; all belief has its alloy of insidious doubt which Christ alone can remove, rendering the faith entirely efficacious with the Father. The highest faith is a gift, freely and gladly bestowed upon those that have won what belief they can obtain.

25. And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together. Always Christ wished to avoid publicity for his miracles of healing, and so he hastened to perform the cure before a still larger crowd should gather. He rebuked the unclean

26. And having cried out, and torn him much, he came out : and *the boy* became as one dead ; insomuch that the more part said, He is dead.

27. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up ; and he arose.

28. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, *How is it* that we could not cast it out?

29. And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer.

spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. The *I* is emphatic. " My disciples have tried and failed, but I shall not fail. I, whose power is absolute and whom you must obey, I command you." It is a majestic utterance.

26. And having cried out, and torn him much, he came out. It was a final epileptic fit, the last malicious effort of the demon. He would do as much damage as possible before he left the frail form in which he had been dwelling. Satan has no mercy ; he is all hatred. And *the boy became as one dead ; insomuch that the more part said, He is dead.* This was the stupor of utter exhaustion in which such fits leave the sufferer.



Healing the Demoniac Boy. Raphael.

27. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up ; and he arose. This could be nothing but miraculous ; the lad was unconscious, and no human means could thus arouse him. Matt. 17 : 18 tells us that the boy's cure began at once and was permanent. Luke 9 : 42 pictures the Saviour as leading the restored son to his father, a priceless gift, and the following verse describes the amazement of the spectators as they witnessed " the majesty of God " ; for they perceived correctly that only God's power working through Jesus could have accomplished the marvel.

28. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, *How is it* that we could not cast it out? It must be remembered that the three disciples closest to Jesus and most fully empowered by faith had been absent with the Master on Mt. Hermon, so that only the nine disciples of inferior grace and strength had thus failed. But even they might well be abashed, since Christ had expressly promised them power over evil spirits (Matt. 10 : 1 ; Luke 9 : 1). We also are often disheartened by our failures, and may well imitate the disciples and take them to Jesus. There is always a reason for them, and he can point it out.

29. And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer. " And fasting," the King James version adds, but without the best manuscript authority. Earnest prayer absorbs one, and leads one to disregard the allurements of the flesh, the temptations of worldliness, and even the demands of natural appetite, and to concentrate upon our main and eternal interests. Matt. 17 : 20 reports Jesus as ascribing their failure to their lack of faith, which of course was one reason for their lack of prayer, and as declaring that if their faith was only so slight as to be compared to a tiny mustard seed it would suffice to procure the removal of a mountain, or to do any other seemingly impossible thing. There are degrees of wickedness even among demons, and therefore degrees of power and differences in difficulty among spiritual tasks. The conquest of demons, and especially such demons as that which had seized upon the poor boy, was admittedly a serious task, requiring all the resources of a strong nature developed by faith and prayer ; but the conquest could be made, because the force for it was available to every follower

of the Lord. This encouragement is for us also whenever we are faced with any task, however difficult it may be.

WHAT FAITH AND PRAYER CAN DO. It was while Christ was praying that he was transfigured. "There is a transfiguration glory in prayer for every one who, like Jesus, avails himself of its opportunities." — *Rev. M. E. Dodd, D.D.*

"Faber begins one of his religious papers with the abrupt demand, 'What has God done that his creatures do not trust him?' He means to say that the natural and proper thing for man is to 'have faith in God.' Why, then, he asks, has faith the poor place it has in the lives of so many of us?" — *Rev. John A. Hutton.*

Faith and prayer put us into touch with God, so that his power — all of his power we need to do his will — flows through our lives and out into our tasks and all our human relations. Faith and prayer thus mean peace as well as power, and joy as well as peace. A safe-deposit vault requires two keys, ours, and the master key of the vault tender. Faith and prayer are the two keys which open the great treasure vault of heavenly blessings.

"Never, never, is the transfiguration complete for the Christ till that child is returned healed and well to its father. Never is your transfiguration complete till you have stooped to that smallest wrong and forgiven it, till you have listened to that faintest voice of conscience and made your peace with it." — *Price Collier.* The climax of the glory on the mountain is the duty on the plain. Faith and prayer have not completed their transfiguring work till splendor has passed into service.

LESSON IV (17). — April 22.

JESUS AND THE HOME. — Mark 10: 1-16.

PRINT vs. 2-9, 13-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Honor thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with promise).* — *EPH. 6: 2.*

Devotional Reading : Eph. 6 : 1-9.

Primary Topic : JESUS LOVES LITTLE CHILDREN.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 13-16 ; Luke 18 : 15, 16.

Memory Verse : And he took them in his arms and blessed them. Mark 10 : 16.

Junior Topic : JESUS WANTS CHILDREN TO COME TO HIM.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 13-15 ; Luke 18 : 15, 16.

Memory Verse : Suffer the little children to come unto me ; forbid them not. Mark 10 : 14.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : BEING A CHRISTIAN AT HOME.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will, of course, confine their attention to the scene with the little children, adding the parallel passage in Luke. Make it an evangelistic lesson, showing the boys and girls how much Christ loves them, and inspiring in their hearts a love for him in return, and a desire to do his will and take their stand for him in all their lives. Do not forget the home aspects of the lesson, and urge the pupils to try during the week to do just what they think Christ would have them do in their home life, reporting their experiences the next Sunday.

The Older Classes have in this lesson the vital topic of marriage and the still wider topic of the home life of Christians. Many problems arise in connection with both themes, and this may well be made, in the main, a question-box meeting. The teacher will obtain questions from many, and will add other questions. He may himself "open" the box and answer the questions, or he may have the pastor present, or some other authority, to answer the questions for him. Take time for class discussion of the more important questions.

Question Suggested for Discussion :

What are the chief enemies of the home life of to-day ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — In March, A.D. 30, the last three months of Christ's ministry.

Place. — Some town of Peræa, the country east of the Jordan.

THE ROUND TABLE.**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

The Old Testament attitude toward divorce.

The New Testament attitude toward marriage and divorce.

The homes that Jesus loved.

Christian teachings concerning home life.

Christian principles relating to home discipline.

Religious training of the young in the home.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Nicoll's *Sunday Evening*. Matheson's *Messages of Hope*. Wright's *The Friendship of God*. Warfield's *Faith and Life*. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*. Payson's *Sermons*, Vol. 3. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Vol. 8.

Matthew Henry's *Works*, Vol. 2. Pearse's *The Gentleness of Jesus*. Gwynne's *Divorce in America* (1925; Macmillan). For a statement of the more liberal view see Norcross's *Christianity and Divorce* (1926; Stratford Company). W. W. Faris's *The Christian Home*. Luccock's *The Home God Meant*. Stocking's *The Dearest Spot on Earth*. Summerbell's *Christian Home Training*. Cope's *Religious Education in the Family*. Betts's *How to Teach Religion*. Hulbert's *The Church and Her Children*.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Being a Christian at Home.

I. MOTHERS AND FATHERS IN THE HOME, vs. 1-12.

The question of divorce.

The sacredness of marriage.

Love, the bond of the home.

II. CHILDREN IN THE HOME, vs. 13-16.

Children in Christ's kingdom.

Blessing the children.

The Christian nurture of youth.

2. And there came unto him Pharisees, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? trying him.

3. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4. And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

I. MOTHERS AND FATHERS IN THE HOME, vs. 1-12. At this point Mark omits much which is recorded by Luke and John, including Christ's visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles when he opened the eyes of a man born blind, the sending out of the seventy missionaries, a second visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication, a tour in Peræa, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the determination of the Sanhedrin to put Christ to death, and his retirement northward into Samaria. After he had remained quietly in that region for a few weeks, he set out on his final journey to Jerusalem, not travelling directly south, but traversing Peræa, the country east of the Jordan. It was there that our lesson took place, as the Saviour was teaching the crowds that flocked to him.

2. **And there came unto him Pharisees.** Their persecution and the determined hostility of the Jewish rulers had driven Christ from Judæa. Now, as he turns his face again toward the Holy City, he meets his old enemies, as bitterly opposed to him as ever. **And asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife** ("for any reason" — Matt. 19:3)? **trying him.** The Pharisees had criticised Christ on many occasions and openly, but here they are adopting new tactics, and seeking to embroil him with one of the two schools of Jewish theologians which were at variance on this point, those of Hillel and Shammai, the former holding that a man could divorce his wife for any dislike, and the latter that he could divorce her only for unfaithfulness. Already in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:31, 32), Christ had sided with the second party, and perhaps the questioners knew of this stand, and merely sought greater publicity for it in order to add to the number of his foes. Herod Antipas, in whose territory Christ was at the time, was a notorious adulterer, and the Pharisees probably wished to make Christ come out openly as an accuser of him.

3. **And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?** In every time of doubt and difficulty, follow Christ's example and go to the Bible, where you will always find wisdom for the need. The Pharisees acknowledged the authority of Moses, and would not dispute his words as they would have been quick to dispute Christ's. Note that our Lord does not say "What did Moses *advise* you?" but "What did Moses *command* you?"

4. **And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.** The law is to be found in Deut. 24:1-4. The answer does not go to the root of the matter, for the dispute was as to the sufficient *reason* for the divorce: any reason, or the one reason of infidelity?

5. But Jesus said unto them, For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.

6. But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them.

7. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife;

8. And the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two, but one flesh.

9. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

5. But Jesus said unto them, For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. Our Lord implies the truth that all laws, human and divine, must be adapted to the state of civilization for which they are written. It is useless to lay down a law which is so far ahead of men's understanding and conscience that it will not be obeyed. Jesus often had to say to his hearers. "The Law commands so and so, but I say unto you." The time had come for an enlarged conception of the Law given through Moses, and Christ's teachings gave that enlargement. Thus in the days of the ancient Hebrews polygamy was allowed. Thus in Christ's own day human slavery was tolerated, and the world had to wait two thousand years for its abolition through the influence of Christ's teachings. Thus in our own day the world is but beginning to shake itself loose from the evils of war and of drunkenness.

6. But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them. That is, God created in mankind the physical conditions which made marriage necessary for the perpetuation of the race, and placed in his creatures the instinct of parenthood, the holy sentiment of love, and the longing for home life. The family is a divine institution, the fundamental institution, and on the purity of the marriage relation rests the soundness of society. This is the essence of Christ's argument.

7. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother. The "cause" is this relation between man and woman ordained by God. This relation between husband and wife precedes and makes possible fatherhood and motherhood; because it stands back of those sacred relations, it is even more sacred than they, and is to be regarded before one's filial duties, though not at all to the neglect of them. Fathers and mothers would be the first thing to instruct their children. And shall cleave to his wife. This is the essential thing; the leaving of father and mother is to be only so far as is necessary in order to give due affection and care to one's wife and children. This is to be no mere duty-doing but is to be a *cleaving*, that is, a warm, loving union, of heart and life, a bond indissoluble in time and eternity. That is the true marriage, of which the free-and-easy divorces so common to-day and in our country make horrid mockery.

8. And the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two, but one flesh. "The creation of man, male and female, is the ground for the common life of the marriage union, and that life makes husband and wife in such sense one that every other relation, even the filial, must yield to it." — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond*.

9. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. These solemn words come to us prophetically from the ancestor of the human race, from God the Father, and from Christ the Son. They are suitably made the climax of the marriage service. They fix the perpetuity of wedlock, and establish the permanence of the family. The husband and wife may be parted by mischief-makers and slanderers, by the sins of either party, by the insidious vileness of a wicked man or woman. Whoever is responsible for the breaking of the sacred relation has upon him from that time the condemnation of the Most High.

ADULTERY IN THE LIFE AND HEART. Christ's position regarding divorce was in absolute harmony with the spirit of the law, but took such extreme ground when contrasted with the careless practice of the times, and seemed so contrary to the teachings of eminent Jewish religious leaders, that when the disciples had Jesus to themselves they asked him again about the matter. His reply was an even more positive statement that divorce of wife from husband or of husband from wife (except, — as a comparison of Gospels shows, and also a careful reading of this entire passage in Mark, — for the one cause of infidelity) amounts to adultery, and should be so regarded by men as it is undoubtedly so regarded by God.

But what is infidelity to the marriage vows? The practice of our courts and the teachings of many ministers of the gospel widen the traditional interpretation of

Christ's words. "The basis of true marriage is love, mutual respect, helpfulness, and forbearance. When a union becomes one of intolerable cruelties, neglect, debasing association or a condition of master and slave, the law may declare dissolved what has already ceased to exist, if it ever had existence in fact, without violating the teachings of Christ." — *Frank H. Norcross, LL.D.* But these freer views are attended with grave danger, and have gradually led to an abuse of divorce which constitutes one of the worst perils of modern life.

The evil of promiscuous divorce is greater in the United States than elsewhere in Christian countries, and is one of the living shames of our nation. In 1906 England and Wales granted 670 divorces and separations, the largest number ever granted there in one year up to that time. In the same year the United States granted 72,062. In that year Germany granted 12,180; France, 10,019; Italy, 859 separations — no divorce is allowed there.

We greatly need a national divorce law. A person will be a bigamist in one State and legally wedded in another. "All of the 48 States codes, instead of doing everything in their power to guard the Seventh Commandment, permit, not one alone, but *fifty-two separate causes for dissolution of the marriage bond, not counting those for annulment.* As no punishment is provided for such penal offences as adultery, cruelty, and desertion, but rather reward in the right to remarriage, the assertion that the Seventh Commandment has been actually eliminated from the Decalogue by our legislatures can scarcely be called in question." — *Rev. Walker Gwynne, D.D.*

LOVE, THE BOND OF THE HOME. "The human love which Christ recognized was infinitely lower than the Divine, but it was faithful and tender after the same manner, though not to the same degree." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

"Let reverence be illustrated in the family life. If the father shows respect and attention to the mother, and the mother shows deference and honor to the father, the children will not be slow to catch the spirit." — *Rev. Jay T. Stocking.*

"Love and mutual service knit souls together in the bonds of Christ. No other community of interest can do this. Ambition for social advancement, or for wealth; love of pleasure; even devotion to intellectual nurture and pursuits — all these must give way and be held in strict subordination to the demands of loving intimacy and mutual ministries in the home." — *Rev. William Wallace Faris, D.D.*

"The difference between the fight for home happiness to-day and the fight for home happiness no longer than fifty years ago is quite like the difference between an orchardist's fight for fruit to-day and his fight for fruit before the days of San José scale and codling moth and co-operative pests. The task is not easier. It is harder. The enemies are not fewer. They are more. The need for fighting is not less. It is greater. But so also is the prize more worth while." — *Rev. George N. Luccock, D.D.*

"Christ taught us that a man and his wife are a new single creation of God; God joins them together. If they come together without God's will, following their chance desires or their unhallowed impulses, seeking social status, wealth, or dignity by that sacred step; if, in a word, they are married atheistically, not bringing God into the relation, then that is not marriage at all — it is only sin, and cannot be hidden as sin by any institution that the law chooses to create. But when they are married in the true way, joined together by God, then the tie that is formed is indissoluble; it is indeed for better or for worse they take each other." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Admit impediment. Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds,

Or bends with the remover to remove.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks

Within his bending sickle's compass come;

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,

But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom." — *William Shakespeare.*

II. CHILDREN IN THE HOME, vs. 13-16. Apparently the Master was still in the house talking with his disciples (verse 10) when the little children were brought to him. Not long before, in Capernaum, Christ had rebuked his disciples' contention over the place of honor by taking a little child in his arms and telling the ambitious and quarrelling men that whoever should receive one such child in his name would thereby receive Christ, and with Christ would receive the Father. The disciples should certainly have remembered that lovely scene, but they seem not to have done so.

13. And they were bringing unto him little children, that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them.

14. But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God.

13. **And they were bringing unto him little children, that he should touch them.** Probably the children were brought by their parents, and the parents were disciples of Jesus. No true Christian but desires earnestly to bring his children to the Saviour. We cannot bring the boys and girls literally to Christ, but we can do so in a very real way, as truly as these old-time parents did it. Matt. 19: 13 tells us that the request was not only that Christ should lay his hands on the children, but that he should pray for them; indeed, the first was only a symbol of the second. Children were often taken by their mother and father to the head of the synagogue, that they might receive a blessing from the holy man. Christ's touch was a token of the imparting of his spirit to the children, and the blessing that went with it. What greater joy



The Child in the Midst.

Blda.

could we ask for any child than that he should thus be touched by the world's Redeemer? To bring this about is the aim of all Sunday-school teaching. **And the disciples rebuked them.** Perhaps the visit interrupted Christ's teaching; but we may be sure the Master was glad of the interruption. Perhaps the Saviour was weary, and the disciples were seeking to preserve his rest; but Christ's meat was to do the will of the Father, and no recreation rested him so much as to bless the world, and especially little children. The motive of the disciples was to shield Jesus, but they should have known that in this matter he did not want to be shielded.

14. **But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation.** Nothing so aroused our Lord as an offence against loving kindness. He could overlook the disciples' forgetfulness of his teachings, though they were so recent and pointed, but he was angry at the affront put alike upon childhood and parenthood. He felt himself deeply injured when the love of those fathers and mothers was repelled. **And said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not.** "The charter of the children's rights. Words of infinite grace to all parents, but spoken to the mistaken disciples in tones that at once arrested them." — *Principal S. D. F. Salmond*. "We hear the Lord's indignant call, as it startles the disciples in the act of dismissing the party." — *Swete*. The implication is that the children will come to Jesus of their own accord, if they are not hindered. Men prevent their coming

15. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.

16. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

when they question their sincerity or their understanding of the matter, or when by their own example or infidel teachings they undermine the children's faith. The children come to Jesus when they love him and try to do his will. **For to such belongeth the kingdom of God.** Not only to children, but to all adults also that have the trusting heart of childhood. The kingdom of God is God's rule upon earth, his authority over human hearts and lives; and that dominion belongs to the childlike because they are most like God, coming nearest to him in purity, in peace, and in the faith which wins all good things.

15. Verily I say unto you. With this solemn formula Christ opens some of his weightiest and most earnest utterances. **Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.** Christ and his kingdom are to be received trustingly, or not at all. If we only half believe in Christ and in his plans for the world and for us, we have really no part in them at all; for he requires whole-hearted service, the enthusiastic yielding of the life to his will.

In what respects are we to be like little children? In their innocence? But Christ came to call sinners into his kingdom. In their unselfishness? But little children are consummate egoists. In their simplicity and directness? Yes, but this is not fundamental. The one great essential of childhood which men and women are to receive in becoming Christians is trustfulness. "The age of childhood is, above everything else, the age of trust. Dependent upon its elders for everything, the whole nature of the child is keyed to trust; on trust it lives, and by means of trust it finds all its means of existence. There is no picture of perfect and simple and implicit trust discoverable in all the world comparable to the picture of the infant lying peacefully and serenely on its mother's bosom." — *Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield*. Thus we are to go to Christ and receive from him salvation and eternal life, doing nothing but receive and trusting him for all the rest.

16. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them. Christ was asked only to lay his hands upon them; but, as always, he did more than he was asked to do, he took them up in his arms, one after the other, and gave each of the dear little ones a loving embrace as well as his blessing. This is one of the sweetest pictures in all the Bible.

THE CHRISTIAN NURTURE OF YOUTH. They brought the children to Jesus, not that they should touch him, but that he should touch them. "It is by higher models that the child must be touched if it is to have any mental growth. A boy's best chance of growth is in associating with people already grown. Parents of the coming generation, bring your children to Jesus!" — *George Matheson*.

"The greatest business of any generation of people is the education of its children. Before this all other enterprises and obligations must give way, no matter what their importance. It is at this point that civilization succeeds or fails." — *Prof. George Herbert Betts*.

"Christianity is essentially a religion of ideal family life. It hopes to solve the world's ills, not by external regulations, but by bringing all men into a new family life." — *Henry F. Cope*.

"The Christian home will give outward and visible sign of its Christian relationship and standing. 1. This will appear first and foremost in its attitude towards religious worship on the Lord's day. On the Sabbath morning the father, the mother, and the children should wend their way to worship, should sit together in the family pew, and join as a family in song and praise. 2. Christian home training calls for training the children in the habit of private prayer. 3. Christian home training will offer frequent explanations and expositions of Christian truth, and the application of such Christian truth to conduct. 4. The Christian home will show strong regard for the Bible, and will make constant use of the Good Book. 5. The Christian home will be sanctified by the voice of family worship. When children go forth into the world from such homes they will be fortified as Christians, whom no shock of temptation or disaster, and no fell surprise, can separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." — *President Martyn Summerbell, D.D.*

"The essentials for a successful presentation of the stories of the Bible to children

are : (1) a thorough sympathy with a child's point of view ; (2) a strong spiritual understanding of the vital import of the story material ; (3) a careful study of the text itself, until you visualize to yourself the very scenes and have well-marked conceptions of the individuals involved." — *Rev. Henry W. Hulbert, D.D.*

The following, from a sermon preached in England on July 4, 1880, in celebration of the centenary of the Sunday school, is true in still fuller measure to-day : " We owe to the Sunday-school system more than tongue can say, and upon its effective continuance rest in great measure the hopes of the church of Christ. No doubt it has its defects and imperfections : what human institution has not ? But this I know, that since the establishment of Sunday schools the manners and the morality of our land have vastly improved, and true vital godliness has greatly increased. A happy and holy employment has been supplied to young Christians, and old ones too, who felt their Saviour's love, and wanted to do something for him. The number of earnest and faithful ministers of Christ has multiplied an hundredfold ; aye, and missions to the heathen, which scarcely existed before, are on their way to cover the whole earth." — *Rev. Henry Wright.*

" So soon as our children become of years capable of understanding the things of God, we endeavor to bring them to Christ by teaching them the truth. Hence our Sabbath schools, hence the use of the Bible, and family prayer, and catechizing at home. Any who shall say, ' Do not teach your children ; they will be converted in God's own time, if it be his purpose ; therefore leave them to run wild in the streets,' will certainly both ' sin against the child ' and the Lord Jesus. We might as well say, ' If that piece of ground is to grow a harvest, it will do so if it be God's good pleasure ; therefore leave it, and let the weeds spring up and cover it : do not endeavor for a moment to kill the weeds, or sow the good seed.' " — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

" In teaching children the knowledge of God, both the parents are concerned to do their part. Solomon speaks both of the instruction of the father, and the law of the mother, Prov. 1 : 8 ; but when they are little, the mother has a greater opportunity of instilling into them that which is good, and ought to improve it." — *Matthew Henry.*

" It is perhaps impossible for any one who is not a real, consistent Christian to educate children properly. None but such can truly dedicate their children to God. None but such can sincerely pray for, or obtain from Christ, that wisdom and grace which are necessary to bring them up for God : and none but such can expect a blessing to follow their exertions." — *Edward Payson.*

LESSON V (18). — April 29.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP. — Mark 10:17-27; 12:41-44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.* — **MATT. 6:21.**

Devotional Reading : Isa. 55 : 1-5.

Primary Topic : LOVING JESUS BEST OF ALL.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 17-27.

Memory Verse : Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Mark 12 : 30.

Junior Topic : PUTTING JESUS FIRST.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 17-27.

Memory Verse : And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. Mark 12 : 30, 31.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE SUPREME CHOICE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE PERIL OF RICHES.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes may use a purse as the symbol of the lesson. In the purse

the teacher may place a number of pointed questions in regard to the wise use of money, generous giving, and wholehearted service of Jesus. The pupils

may draw these out one at a time and answer them ; but reserve this exercise till the lesson story is well fixed, using it only as a review and application of the story.

The Older Classes have the vital topic of wealth : What was Christ's attitude towards it ? What should be the attitude of the church and the Christian ? Is it right to be very rich ? How far is money-making legitimate ? How will a Christian use his money ? Is tithing a Christian principle of giving ? What are some other rules for wise giving ? The theme admits of almost endless applications, and the teacher may well give out in advance a series of pointed questions, inviting the class to come with others.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
Can poverty be abolished ? If so, how ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The rich young ruler, March, A.D. 30, in the last year of Christ's earthly life. The widow's mites, Tuesday, April 4, on Christ's last day of public teaching.

Place. — The rich young ruler, in Peræa. The widow, in the temple at Jerusalem.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

John C. van Dyke's *The Money God*. Cook's *The Larger Stewardship*. Doak's *How to Be Rich*. Charles W. Eliot's *Great Riches*. Evans's *The Currency of the Invisible*. Poteat's *The Withered Fig-Tree: Studies in Stewardship*. Agar's *Modern Money Methods for the Church*. Rigby's *Christ Our Creditor*. Burrell's *The*

Gospel of Gladness. Beecher's famous lecture, *The Moral Uses of Luxury and Beauty*. Dewey's *The Two Great Commandments*. Herron's *The Message of Jesus to Men of Wealth*. Watson's *The Inspiration of Our Faith*. Torrey's *Real Salvation*. McNeill's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. Hodges's *The Human Nature of the Saints*. Davidson's *The Called of God*. Ingram's *Faith of Church and Nation*. Hepworth's *Rocks and Shoals*. Hansen's *Wandering Stars*. Matheson's *Messages of Hope*. Guthrie's *Way to Life*. McClelland's *The Mind of Christ*. Church's *Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford*. Vaughan's *Earnest Words for Earnest Men*. Banks's *Bible Soul Winners*. Clifford's *The Dawn of Manhood*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's dealings with the rich.
Christ's teachings concerning power and wealth.
New Testament teachings about eternal life.
Bible precepts on giving.
"Money and the kingdom."
"Giving, the acid test."

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Supreme Choice.

I. THE POOR RICH YOUNG RULER,

Mark 10 : 17-22.

A question of eternal life.
A fatal lack.
Treasure in heaven.

II. THE PERIL OF RICHES, Mark 10 :

23-27.

Trust in riches.
Who can be saved?
The wise use of wealth.

III. THE RICH POOR WIDOW, Mark

12 : 41-44.

Casting into the treasury.
The widow's great gift.
Rich toward God.

MARK 10 : 17. And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

I. THE POOR RICH YOUNG RULER, Mark 10 : 17-22. "When we read this brief story, it strikes us as if we witnessed a tragedy. It is as if we saw one struggling in the sea, making desperate efforts to save himself, and almost grasped by the strong arm of another ; but, just when we thought him saved, he was swept away, and perished." — *Prof. A. B. Davidson*.

17. And as he was going forth into the way. Our Lord was in Peræa, and seems to have been starting out on his last journey to Jerusalem, his immediate objective being Bethany. Some of Christ's most important conversations and miracles were wayside ministries. He "went about doing good," and his life sets us an example, that we also should be ready to drop our present occupation whenever a chance to be helpful presents itself to us. There ran one to him. The Master was leaving the town, and the young man felt that his great opportunity was slipping away. He came up panting, proving his zeal for knowledge by his eagerness, and making it manifest that Jesus had gained a hold upon him by his deeds and words so that he set a high value on his wisdom. Are we running to Jesus, or are we casually sauntering to him ? "So run that ye may obtain." Earnestness alone gains prizes, in the material and the spiritual world alike. We learn from Matt. 19 : 22 that the man was young, from Mark 10 : 22 that he was very wealthy, and from Luke 18 : 18 that he was one of the rulers or lay managers of the local synagogue. And kneeled to him. This did not mean that the young man recognized Christ as divine, but it was merely

18. And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, *even* God.

19. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and mother.

20. And he said unto him, Teacher, all these things have I observed from my youth.

21. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

the usual way of showing respect for a distinguished rabbi. Evidently the opposition of the Pharisees to Christ had had little effect in Peræa. **And asked him, Good Teacher.** Certainly thus far the young man did well, for Jesus was assuredly the best man and the wisest teacher the world has ever seen. Even infidels will acknowledge this, and to revere Jesus in these two particulars forms an admirable foundation for faith; but it is only a foundation, and there is no salvation in it. **What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?** "This great phrase, 'eternal life,' occurs first in Daniel (12: 2), and there as a contrast to 'eternal' or 'everlasting' 'contempt.' It was familiar to the Jews, especially to the scribes and Pharisees. It had become a frequent subject of discussion, and in connection with it many questions, some of them serious and others more theoretical, had arisen. In Luke (10: 25) we have the question which is put here by an earnest inquirer put in a very different spirit by a lawyer." — *New Century Bible*. The confused state of the young man's mind is indicated by the form of his question, which incorporates two dissimilar ideas: "What shall I do" implies that eternal life is to be won by merit, gained by personal effort; while "inherit" implies that eternal life comes down to one from some one else as a free gift. The latter is the truth, but the former was undoubtedly the theory on which the young ruler's thought and strivings had been based.

18. **And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good?** Matt. 19: 16 gives the full form of the young man's question, "What *good* thing shall I do?" with the corresponding answer from Christ, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" The reply given in both Mark and Luke hinges on the young man's calling Christ "*good* Teacher." Probably both allusions were included in the conversation, which is reported here very briefly. Christ's answer emphasizes the "why," "With what idea of goodness do you call me good?" **None is good save one, *even* God.** This is not to deny goodness on Christ's part, still less to deny union with God. Our Lord was trying to lift the young man's mind above the doing of good deeds on to the spiritual plane, and to show him that only by the reception of the Spirit of God can any one become really good and thereby receive from God eternal life, the life of God.

19. **Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and mother.** Christ quotes only the second table of the law, the Commandments stating our duty to men, as the young man had asked what he should *do* in order to obtain eternal life. "If doing is all," Christ virtually says, "why ask me about it, when God has summed up a correct human life in the Decalogue? Surely you do not need any 'Good Teacher' to remind you of that." Christ quotes the Commandments freely; "Do not defraud" may be a form of the Ninth Commandment, or it may sum up the four Commandments preceding it. Until the age of printing, when books came within the reach of all, literal and exact quotations could not be insisted on as we require them.

20. **And he said unto him, Teacher, all these things have I observed from my youth.** These Commandments having to do mainly with exterior matters, he kept literally and perfectly. It would have been different if Christ had led him into the spiritual and deeper meaning of these Commandments, and especially if he had introduced the Commandments relating to our duty to God, and the Tenth Commandment which enters so searchingly into the hearts of men. But the young man added (Matthew), "What lack I yet?" showing that, in spite of the outward correctness of his life, he was still dissatisfied, and felt that he fell far short of the eternal life for which he longed.

21. **And Jesus looking upon him loved him.** Jesus loved him because of his nobility of character and his earnestness in the search for what is best in life. "A

22. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.

young man in earnest, and in earnest with respect to spiritual things! The sight is not so common but that we may profitably pause to admire and ponder it. When Cæsar saw Brutus for the first time and heard him pleading in the Forum, he said, 'Yon youth is destined to make his mark, because he intends strongly.' The youth who here prostrated himself before Jesus intended strongly." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.* "There is a tombstone in the Copp's Hill burying-ground at Boston, inscribed, 'He was an enemy to enthusiasm.' Our Lord was not an enemy to enthusiasm. When he beheld this enthusiastic young man, he loved him." — *Dean George Hodges.* **And said unto him, One thing thou lackest.** It was only one thing, but it was the essential thing. "The Lord knew that he would probably get wounded and slain out in the battles of the world just through that one weakness." — *Rev. Andrew Hansen.* A ladder that fails by only a foot of reaching the height is useless as a ladder. The young man lacked only one step, but it was the step that led to the Saviour. "If the young ruler had been able to make the last sacrifice, then one dares to think he would have become a chief apostle, and the rival of St. Paul." — *Rev. John Watson, D.D.* ("*Ian Maclaren*"). **Go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.** This command, it is to be noted, was addressed to the young ruler personally, and was intended to meet his special need. It is not to be taken as a universal requirement of poverty. Christ did not make this demand of his other rich friends. Indeed, if all Christians should distribute their possessions among the poor they would simply pauperize the world, and would deprive Christianity of its chief material means of advancing the kingdom of God. The command, however, does indicate our Lord's constant sympathy for the poor, and his feeling that giving

is one of the sure tests of true religion. **And thou shalt have treasure in heaven.** Permanent treasure, as against the fleeting possessions of this life. Indeed, wise giving is one of the most certain ways of transferring our possessions to the next world. **And come, follow me.** This was the essence of the command. Christ was a poor man, he had nowhere to lay his head, and a rich man who held tightly to his gold would make a strange addition to Christ's little band of followers. But John and Peter and James and Matthew, at any rate, did not sell all their goods when they became Christ's disciples, and this command was laid on the young ruler to test his devotion: was he ready to leave all and follow Jesus?

22. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful. He went away sorrowful because he had made what Dante calls "the Great Refusal." He had chosen wealth before whole-hearted devotion to Christ. "This man went away sorrowful, but you may go away joyful." — *Thomas Guthrie.* **For he was one that had great possessions.** Great wealth or little wealth — what difference does it make compared with the gain of Christ! Having him, we have indeed "great possessions." "Within a few months hundreds in Jerusalem remembered and obeyed this saying of our Lord, and brought their goods, and laid them at the apostles' feet (Acts 4: 34-37)." — *John Keble.* Perhaps among them was this rich young man whom Jesus loved.

TREASURE IN HEAVEN. "It is the extravagance of the money worship — the belief that money alone is omnipotent — that produces disappointment, dissatisfaction, discontent." — *Prof. John C. van Dyke.*

"Jesus saw that the young man's whole life centered in the things with which time deals, and that he must be put into touch with timeless things." — *Rev. T. Calvin McClelland, D.D.*



The Rich Young Man.

23. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24. And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25. It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

"Every young fellow is a rich young ruler in his own opinion; and what a world he has before him! But he must give it up. Yet when you give up for Christ your all, you get all." — *Rev. John McNeill, D.D.*

"Heinrich Heine (1800-1856), the Jewish poet, was once invited by a Christian hostess to a banquet. He was the most brilliant talker in Europe, and the hostess expected him to be the life of the table. But on taking his seat he remained silent. Her ladyship called to him, 'Herr Heine, why so pensive?' He, with a look around the magnificent room, and with the ironical smile characteristic of him, said, 'Oh, I was just wondering what you Christians are going to do with the camel question.' There are signs that this question asked in jest may be asked in earnest, and it is time we Christians were ready with our answer." — *Edwin McNeill Potest.*

"We cannot expect to prosper if we are dishonest to the Lord. He can easily enough measure back to us as we measure out to him. Hence, happy are they who, being saved by grace, bring him *all* their tithes, for peace and prosperity shall be their portion." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

"There is a step beyond justice — generosity. It is not enough that you give to your brother what he has a legal right to; you must impart to him that to which he has no legal right." — *George Matheson.*

"Whether men were rich or poor, Christ did not care. It made no difference to him. He did care supremely whether they were rich or poor in the currency of heaven." — *Dean George Hodges.*

II. THE PERIL OF RICHES, Mark 10: 23-27. 23. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples. The Saviour gazed earnestly at his disciples, to see how they were affected by this moving incident. Were they noting it, or were they careless? Were they sorrowful, or censorious? There was at least one among them, Judas Iscariot, who sorely needed the lesson which Christ was about to emphasize. **How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!** "How hardly" means "with what difficulty." The kingdom of God is a spiritual realm, the reign of God over human hearts. Riches constitute a material realm. The first is eternal, the second perishable. The first is pure, the second is sadly interwoven with iniquity. It is not impossible, but it is very hard, for one to belong to both kingdoms at once.

24. And the disciples were amazed at his words. They looked around them, and saw rich people honored in church and state, — honored because of their wealth and not in spite of it. It had been prophesied that the Jewish kingdom should be rich and powerful, with all the wealth of the world flowing toward Jerusalem. This seemed quite contrary to the statements of Jesus. **But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them.** He answered their astonished looks, for probably they had not ventured to put their dismay into words. **Children.** Jesus was laying down a hard doctrine, but he prefaced it with a loving term of address. "It is hard to enter my kingdom," he virtually said; "but I love you, and I will lay no unnecessary burden upon you." **How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!** Not wealth, but reliance on wealth for one's happiness, is the peril to the spiritual life. A rich man who really trusts in Christ for his well being is in the kingdom of God in spite of his riches. "For them that trust in riches" is omitted in some of the most authoritative manuscripts; if it is left out, Christ declared that entrance into the kingdom is difficult for any one, whether rich or poor. The road to the kingdom is straitened, the entrance to the kingdom is narrow.

25. It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. The Greek word for "camel" (*kamelon*) differs from the word for "anchor-rope" (*kamilon*) by only one letter, and some scholars think that Christ used the latter noun. The narrow gate for pedestrians alongside the broad and high gate in a city wall was called "the needle's eye," and some hold

26. And they were astonished exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved?

27. Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God.

MARK 12:41. And he sat down over against the treasury, and beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

that our Lord alluded to such an entrance, which a camel would have much difficulty in entering. Probably, however, he meant a literal camel and a literal needle, using the comic exaggeration so common in proverbs of all nations, and especially in the proverbs of the East.

26. And they were astonished exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved? On the face of it, a rich man has the best chance at goodness. He is not tempted to rob or steal or lie or cheat in order to get on in the world. He can give generously. He has ample leisure for prayer and Bible reading and the doing of good deeds. If entrance into the kingdom is so hard for a rich man, it must be absolutely impossible for a poor man; so they would argue.

27. Jesus looking upon them saith. What a look the Saviour must have bent upon his perplexed disciples! All the grace and joy and blessedness of the atonement shone out of his eyes. **With men it is impossible, but not with God.** Man cannot earn salvation, but God can give it. There is no merit in man, but the merits of Christ may pass over upon man, if he will accept them from Christ in faith. This is the central truth of Christianity, the glorious doctrine of the atonement. **For all things are possible with God.** All things, that is, which are in accord with God's nature. God cannot be untrue to himself. "The history of Christianity from the beginning to the present day has been the triumph of the impossible." — *Bishop A. F. W. Ingram.*

THE WISE USE OF WEALTH. "In money-using a tremendous leakage is constantly going on. Millions of dollars are being used in wasteful and unnecessary ways that ought to be devoted to the service of God. The greatest failure in the stewardship of money is not in the matter of giving, it is in the matter of using. That is where God is robbed. When church members habitually spend all the way from a dime to a dollar, or more, a night for the movie show, and do this several nights a week, and then give a nickel or a dime to the Lord on Sunday, the Lord is certainly not being given a square deal." — *Charles A. Cook.*

"The men of wealth in our American churches can begin to solve our pressing social problems any time they choose, by simply being disciples of the Lord Christ. As the Father sent Christ into the world to sacrifice himself in the service of man, so Christ sends the corporation manager, the merchant, the mill owner, the mine operator, the street railway president, to be a living sacrifice in the service of men." — *George D. Herron.*

"The very rich man must have a high purpose in the use of riches, which his children can see and learn to imitate; and the convincing proof that he himself was possessed by a noble purpose will be the fact that his children escape the great danger of being brought up rich, and develop a correspondingly high purpose in their own lives." — *Charles W. Eliot, LL.D.*

"I tell you it is not riches and it is not poverty — it is human nature that lies back of both of them that is dangerous; and that is the trouble. So far from riches being dangerous, within proper bounds, the procurement of riches is training in morality; and so far as the use of riches is concerned, it is the development of the spiritual man as distinguished from the animal man." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

III. THE RICH POOR WIDOW, Mark 12:41-44. Our Lord had passed through a day of fierce opposition. One after another, the various classes of his bitter foes had assailed him with crafty questions, all designed to get him into trouble. The scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, each in turn had thus attacked him, and for each he had a ready and crushing rejoinder. Now at the close of the day, having "come off more than conqueror," he sat quietly in the temple, a serene smile upon his face, quietly watching the passing throng. He was happy, for he was in his Father's house.

41. And he sat down over against the treasury. In the temple "Court of the Women" stood thirteen brass chests with trumpet-shaped openings, four of them

42. And there came a poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing.

43. And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury:

44. For they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

for freewill offerings, and nine for the regular temple offerings, money being given in lieu of sacrifices. These chests were placed in a colonnade which was called "the treasury." **And beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury.** They would drop in, for the most part, the common copper coins, the rattle of which drew the Saviour's attention as he sat where he could see what was going on. **And many that were rich cast in much.** The temple treasury was enormously wealthy, though from it was taken money for the lavish upkeep of the sacred building. In the time of Pompey and Crassus it contained about two and a half million dollars in coin and vessels of gold and silver worth nearly ten million dollars. It was the fashion to give to the temple gifts so extravagant that a law had to be passed limiting the gifts to a certain proportion of one's income. No such law is needed to-day in Christian lands!

42. **And there came a poor widow.** "One poor widow," as the margin of the Revised Version puts it. A single, solitary, sorrowful, poverty-stricken figure, lost in the passing crowds, but filling the Master's eye." — *New Century Bible*. **And she cast in two mites, which make a farthing.** "Mite" is a shortened form of "minute," the most minute coin. It was the *lepton*, a copper coin, the smallest made. It was worth half a Roman *quadrans*, and that was one-fourth of an *as*. The *as* was worth about a cent, so that the *lepton* or mite was worth one-eighth of a cent or one-sixteenth of an English penny. Being so very poor, the widow might have kept at least one mite, but she chose to give all she had.

43. **And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you.** This earnest introduction shows the value which our Lord sets on liberal giving and self-sacrifice. **This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury.** Christ does not say that the gifts of the others were valueless in God's eyes, but hers greatly exceeded them all because of the beautiful spirit in which it was offered.

44. **For they all did cast in of their superfluity.** They did not "give until it hurt," but gave only what they would not miss. Their gifts meant no sacrifice. **But she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.** We talk of "the widow's mite," whereas we should speak of "the widow's mites." We say, "I cannot give much, but I will give my mite," when we intend to give a mere trifle. No one really gives "his mite" unless he gives away every cent he has, stripping himself of his possessions entirely. Few terms are so persistently misapplied.

RICH TOWARD GOD. "Money talks. It certainly does, but a Christian's conversation is pitched high. Money should talk in the right way. God, if I understand the New Testament, gauges a man by the way he spends his money, more than by the profession he makes in prayer meeting." — *President Silas Evans, D.D., LL.D.*

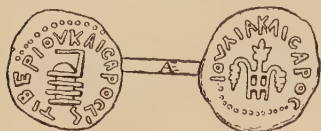
"Nothing can be more hideous in the sight of God than the dominant note in modern business. To care nothing for a man but what I can squeeze out of him in dollars and cents; to force from him the largest possible amount of service, regardless



The Widow's Mites.

Bida.

of his physical, mental, or moral welfare, and give him in return, however excellent his services, the least possible amount of compensation, — is to set one's self in direct opposition to the spirit and message of Jesus. He made, not what I can get out of a man, but what I can add to his life, the supreme test of what I am," — *Alson N. Doak*.



Widow's Mite. (Actual Size.)

Because they are freer from conventionalities, "the poor harken better to the gospel than the rich, and the young better than the old," — *Dean C. J. Vaughan*.

"The stern condition requiring sacrifice is only the fence, the gate, to the garden of God," — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

"As long as Christianity lasts, the heroic ideal must be the standard of all human life," — *Dean R. W. Church*.

"Within the Houses of Parliament there is a standard measure of length, built into the walls, available for anybody's use, and infallible beyond all question, within these realms, as the criterion of linear measurement. Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, is the true standard of perfect manhood, built irremovably into our abiding and progressive humanity," — *John Clifford*.

LESSON VI (19). — May 6.

GREATNESS THROUGH SERVICE. — Mark 9 : 33-50 ; 10 : 35-45.

PRINT Mark 10 : 35-45.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* — MARK 10 : 45.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 42 : 1-7.

Primary Topic : DOING AS JESUS DID.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 35-45.

Memory Verse : Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Mark 12 : 31.

Junior Topic : THE WAY TO BE GREAT.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 35-45.

Memory Verse : Whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant.

Matt. 20 : 27.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW TO BE TRULY GREAT.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS' STANDARD OF GREATNESS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes study only the latter portion of the lesson, and will find it full of practical teachings. Even the boys and girls want to be "it" in their games, to be president of their little societies, to be considered the leader of their "set." It is hard for them to learn the glory of humble service, and that is what the teacher will try to get them to understand.

The Older Classes have before them in this lesson the source of most of the world's strife and sorrow, which is self-seeking. The subject extends into the world of politics and international affairs, for self-seeking is at the bottom of all wars. It reaches into business competition and social rivalries, and even has applications to church affairs. Appoint

members of the class to speak of these several aspects of the lesson.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Can one "get on in the world" while seeking "not to be ministered unto but to minister"?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The first passage, summer of A.D. 29, in the third year of Christ's ministry. The second passage, March, A.D. 30, in the concluding three months before the crucifixion.

Place. — The first passage, Capernaum ; the second, somewhere in Peræa.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Nicoll's *Sunday Evening*. Hugh Black's *Listening to God*. Vincent's *The Covenant of Peace*. Goulburn's *Occasional Sermons*. David Smith's *Man's Need of*

God. Bushnell's *Sermons on Living Subjects*. Michell in *Plain Preaching for a Year*, Vol. 3. Taylor's *Limitations of Life*. Jackson's *The Teaching of Jesus*. Jowett's *The School of Calvary*. Gregg's *New Epistles from Old Lands*. Ingram's *The Faith of Church and Nation*. Baring-Gould's *Village Preaching for Saints' Days*, Vol. 3. Law's *The Grand Adventure*. J. Frank Smith's *My Father's Business and Mine*. Hanzsche's *The Great Themes of Jesus*. Hugh Black's *Christ's Service of Love*. Holland's *Logic of Life*. Hackett's *The Land of Your Sojournings*. Dods's *How to Become Like Christ*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The characters of James and John.
Leaders among the disciples.
Christ's teachings concerning humility.
Imitators of Christians, during Christ's life and later.
Peace in the church of Christ.
Christianity and lowly service.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : What Is True Greatness?

I. STRIFE FOR PRECEDENCE, Mark 9 : 33-50.

Who serves, leads.
Where Christ's rewards go.
Salt in one's self.

II. SHARING CHRIST'S GLORY, Mark 10 : 35-40.

The presumptuous petition.
The searching question.
How to be really great.

III. NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER, Mark 10 : 41-45.

The jealous disciples.
The sacrificial life.
Christ's standard of greatness.

I. STRIFE FOR PRECEDENCE, Mark 9 : 33-50. WHO SERVES, LEADS.

In order to bring together two connected passages in Christ's teachings we return in the history a few months to the period immediately following Christ's journey northward to the region of Cæsarea Philippi and Mount Hermon, the journey in the course of which he was transfigured before Peter, James, and John. He was back in his headquarters at Capernaum, and took a quiet time to ask his disciples what they had been quarrelling about on their way thither. They were ashamed to tell him, for they had been disputing about which of the twelve was to be the greatest in the "kingdom" which Christ was to establish, and they knew that all such discussions would seem to Christ to be both foolish and wicked.

But, though they held their peace, the Saviour had read their minds and did not need to be told. Calling the disciples, who came to him with heads hanging down, our Lord told them that if any of them really wanted to be first, he should make it his ambition to be last of all the apostolic band, the servant of all the others. Then, as a lovely object lesson, he took a little child into his arms, and, while the apostles gazed upon that sweet, trusting, loving face, he bade his followers take that child as their model and seek to incorporate in their lives the child spirit, which is free from ambition, and which in true humility takes from day to day the good things which its father gives it.

WHERE CHRIST'S REWARDS GO. Probably wishing to turn the conversation away from the disciples' disgraceful quarrel, John spoke up and told the Master of an incident that had occurred in some village on the way thither or perhaps in Capernaum itself. They had found some one who was healing demoniacs in the name of Christ, and they had forbidden the man because he did not follow *them* (not, observe, because he did not follow *Christ*). It is evident that Christ's influence had by this time become so far-reaching and powerful as to have aroused great religious fervor in the souls of many who were working independently of the Saviour's immediate band of disciples, and whose zeal was honored by God with the power to work miracles such as Christ and his apostles had been working. It may easily be imagined that John, the "son of thunder" who wanted to call down fire on the inhospitable Samaritan cities, was the leader in forbidding these unauthorized miracle-workers to continue their use of Christ's name, even if they would not cease the working of miracles altogether. John was more interested in the preservation of a spiritual monopoly than in the relief of the suffering demoniacs.

Christ's answer was prompt and stern. The beloved disciple, though he thought he was defending Christ's interests, was acting in a very unchristian way. "Forbid him not," said the Master, "for no one can work a miracle in my name and soon after speak evil of me. He that is not against us is for us." This principle would settle many quarrels. It calls on all Christians to seek points of agreement with far more zeal than points of difference. "If you cannot win complete allegiance," it urges, "win as much as you can, and continue to seek more." Little things count for much in the kingdom of heaven, Christ went on to say. He instanced a cup of cold water, given in honor of Christ. He instanced, on the other hand, any little stumbling block put in the way of a young believer. The slight kindness will most

35. And there come near unto him James and John, the sons of Zēb'-ē-dēe, saying unto him, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee.

36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

certainly be rewarded, and the unkindness would be as a great mill-stone around the neck of the harsh man, drowning him in the depths of the sea.

Christ also said (Matt. 12 : 30), "He that is not with me is against me"; but there is no real contradiction with this passage in Mark. "It is well for us to remember that neutrality cannot last forever, that soon we must rank ourselves definitely on one side or the other, and that he who is not for Christ is against him." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.*

SALT IN ONE'S SELF. Speaking of stumbling blocks put in the way of beginners in the kingdom of heaven led Christ to speak of individual hindrances to the Christian life. He insisted that whatever stood in the way of holiness, purity, right and happy living, should at any cost be cast out of the life, even to the cutting off of a hand or foot or the plucking out of an eye. The Christian is to be cleansed from all iniquity, though he must be bathed in fire to purify himself. The Christian life must be preserved from all contamination, as if wrapped in salt. Nor is the Christian to trust to any outside purifying, for salt exposed to the air will lose its saltiness. The Christian is to have salt in himself, is to be completely filled with the Holy Spirit, so as to be proof against all attacks of wickedness from the world and the devil. Only thus can Christians be at peace one with another, and avoid such shameful quarrels over precedence as gave rise to this discourse of Christ's.

"No life is developed into perfection without cutting off something. Few can stand unmoved in the chapel of Merton College, at Oxford, before that tablet which bears the name of John Coleridge Patteson, with his sculptured figure stretched upon a drifting canoe, with a palm-branch between the folded hands. I know few records of missionary devotion more touching and beautiful than the story of that young and finely endowed minister, cheerfully relinquishing a home of wealth and culture, the society of doting relatives, and the prospect of congenial work in the Church in England, and going out to spend his days among the savages of the Pacific islands, and to fall a victim to their heathen rage in the prime of his manhood." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.*

"The salt will be everything which makes Christian character strong and pungent, everything which acts as a preservative of the soul from moral and spiritual corruption : decision, integrity, firmness of purpose, resistance to the ways and principles of the world. In short, to exhort Christians to 'have salt in themselves' is only another form of exhorting them to have strength of character as Christians." — *Dean E. M. Goulburn.*

II. SHARING CHRIST'S GLORY, Mark 10 : 35-40. Our Lord was on his way to Jerusalem, where he was to die for the sins of the world, — sins caused in large measure by the world's self-seeking. In the midst of this sad and solemn journey he was confronted with a case of self-seeking among his own disciples, and in the inner circle who were dearest to him and from whom he had hoped the most.

35. And there come near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Salome, their mother, was with them, and, according to Matt. 20 : 20, she was their spokesman. She was one of the devoted women who followed Jesus and ministered to him and his disciples, and she prefaced her request with a profound obeisance, "worshipping him." Saying unto him, Teacher. It was not as a teacher that Christ was thus approached, but as the coming king, the head of the kingdom of heaven about which Jesus talked so often. His words had sunk into the ambitious souls of Salome and her two fiery sons, the "sons of thunder." We would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. The disciples expected Jesus to make some such grant as King Ahasuerus made to Esther (Esth. 5 : 3) ; but our Lord was no Eastern despot, no barbaric monarch; he exercises reason when he gives. He promises to grant whatever we desire ; but only when he abides in us, guiding our desires, so that the issue may be happy (John 15 : 7).

36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? Christ had spoken, not long before (Mark 10 : 29, 30), of the great things which his followers should receive, "with persecutions." Salome and James and John had overlooked those two words. They had forgotten also the Saviour's prophecies of his coming

37. And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on *thy* left hand, in thy glory.

38. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39. And they said unto him, We are able. And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40. But to sit on my right hand or on *my* left hand is not mine to give; but *it is for them* for whom it hath been prepared.

death on the cross, with its accompaniment of shame and agony. He had just repeated the prophecy (Mark 10 : 32-34), but how quickly they forgot!

37. And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on *thy* left hand, in thy glory. The Jews thus described those who were next to the king in honor and authority. Christ had recently (Matt. 19 : 28) declared that "in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory," the twelve apostles also should sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. James and John wanted *their* thrones to rank next to Christ's! Their presumption was appalling.

38. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. "The actual issue lay clear in his view, and he knew what a tragic disillusionment awaited them. A week later, and they would discover the tragic reality. They would see him crowned — yes, but with a crown of thorns; they would see him lifted up, but on a cross, not on a throne; and on his right hand and on his left — the stations which they were coveting for themselves — not purple-clad courtiers, but two bleeding wretches, writhing in agony and moaning out their lives. Would it always be well for us if we got our prayers?" — *Prof. David Smith.*

"Was he cruel to say me nay? Behold,
He said it in love for me;
For what I took for a throne of gold
Was a cross of misery."

Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? A cup with its liquid contents symbolized to the Jews one's fate, whether sad or joyous. "My cup runneth over," David sang, meaning the cup of his blessings. Christ's cup was to be full of bitterness and black woe. Or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? The descent into the cold waters of baptism signified to the Jews a death to sin as well as purifying from its stain. "Can you go down with me into the dark flood of death?" Christ asked.

39. And they said unto him, We are able. How often, in the dark years that followed, the years made terrible by awful persecution, must the two apostles have shrunk in shame as they recalled this boast! In a measure it was justified, for they made abundant proof of their heroism, but in themselves they were not able; if they were strong, it was only because the risen Saviour and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, gave them the strength they required. And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink: and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. "His words were thus fulfilled: John, the beloved disciple, lived to be the last survivor of the Twelve, drinking long and often of that bitter cup of sorrow; baptized, though not unto death, with that baptism of blood; a martyr in will but not in effect. James, after his eleven years of ministry, drinks, and is baptized, even to the martyr's death. So their Lord's prophecy is fulfilled. That is his gift on earth to those who ask to be next him in glory. A poor gift, as the world might take it; and yet, was it not glory? Who does not envy those who were counted worthy to suffer and to die for the name of the Lord Jesus?" — *Rev. William Michell.*

40. But to sit on my right hand or on *my* left hand is not mine to give; but *it is for them* for whom it hath been prepared. Prepared, not by the human Jesus, but by his Father (Matt. 20 : 23); "the Father is greater than I." Though he was one with the Father, Christ was wrapped about with the casings of the flesh; as he did not, while a man, know all that God knew, so that portions of the future were hidden from him, so also he could not do all that God could.

41. And when the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation concerning James and John.

42. And Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them.

HOW TO BE REALLY GREAT. "The glory of Christ's realm is glory in holiness. By the cross Jesus was elevated to the throne which he now occupies, and he whose life is a sacrifice nearest in value and likeliest in character to that which Jesus offered upon Calvary will sit nearest to him in glory." — *William M. Taylor.*

"The disciples' request was based on a false theory of life, the official theory, that it is the place that makes the man, and not the man that makes the place, great or small, as the case may be. That false theory, how it still blinds men! How men still regard the settings and trappings of life as more than life, position as more than manhood!" — *Rev. Thomas Law, D.D.*

"Grant that I may have the wondrously facile skill of some great instrumentalist, that with perfect ease I may weave and fashion rich and moving harmonies! Let me sit upon the throne of the musical world!' Ye know not what ye ask! the sleepless vigilance, the uncheered rehearsals, the aching drill and discipline; musical sovereignties are reached by very obscure and toilsome stairs. It is not otherwise when we reason in the realm of the spiritual. 'Grant that we may sit with thee on thy throne!' In this high region dignities are not doled, nor are laurels distributed to every caller at the gate. In the army of the Lord promotion is not by patronage: it is the gracious heritage of fidelity. We do not wing our way to crowns and sovereignties; step by step we trudge to them. 'Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler.' 'We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom.'" — *J. H. Jowett.*

III. NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO, BUT TO MINISTER, Mark 10 : 41-45. 41. And when the ten heard it. Peter was one of the Inner Circle, but in this matter, naturally, he went with the rest of the apostles. They may have heard the request made, or some one present may have told them of it; they would not learn it from the four immediately involved! They began to be moved with indignation concerning James and John. Perhaps before this they had been jealous of the sons of Zebedee, whose social position seems to have been superior to that of the other apostles. Now they were enraged at their bold attempt to put the others into an inferior station.



King and Cupbearer.

42. And Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them. He called the ten disciples, though perhaps John and James were present also. It was vital for the success of Christ's mission that the apostolic band, in whose hands he would leave his church, should dwell at peace one with another, and work as a unit without selfish strife for precedence. The lesson is no less important for Christ's church in all ages. Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them. Worldlings, not animated by the spirit of Christ, have the name of ruling, but they

are without the loving and disinterested character which constitutes a real ruler of men. They are not true lords of men, but they "lord it over them," they are despotic, tyrannical, ambitious, selfish. Christ spoke of Gentiles and not Jews, because the Jews were at the time a subject race, lorded over by the Romans. And their great ones exercise authority over them. There is a legitimate authority for which

43. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister;

44. And whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all.

45. For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

the church has room, for some are fitted to direct and lead and others to follow; but it must all be in the spirit of brotherhood. Christianity is diametrically opposed to arbitrary authority such as the Roman rulers exercised.

43. **But it is not so among you.** In the Roman kingdom the first was emphatically first, to be served in all things. In Christ's kingdom the last was to be first, the servant of all was regarded as the chief of all. The fundamental principle of Christianity was precisely the opposite of the fundamental principle of worldliness, and it is so to-day. **But whosoever would become great among you.** Christ does not deprecate the desire for greatness, but implies that it is commendable, and points the way to satisfy it; only, let his followers seek the true greatness, and not the false. **Shall be your minister.** That is, your servant, ministering to your needs, which is the primary and original sense of "minister" meaning the head of a church. "Prime minister" means the chief servant of the state. "I serve" is the motto of the Prince of Wales.

44. **And whosoever would be first among you.** Some one must be first in any association. Every organization that would function successfully must have a head. It is wrong to seek headship if one seeks only to gratify one's pride and sense of power; it is right to seek it if one desires only to help as many as possible. It is a common saying, "The office should seek the man, not the man the office"; but an ambition to serve largely is an honorable ambition, and there is no more reason why a man should not offer himself for an office to which he thinks himself fitted than why he should not seek a position to teach or to keep books or to care for a garden. **Shall be servant of all.** All the company among whom he would be first.

45. **For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.** Christ as the Son of man (his favorite name for himself) was representative man, perfect man, an example to all men. He who was tempted in all points as we are, was compelled to resist unholy ambitions; indeed, it was with these that the devil pressed most hardly upon him when he tempted the Saviour in the wilderness. But to yield to selfish ambition would frustrate our Lord's chief purpose in coming to earth, which was not to aggrandize himself but to uplift humanity, not to please himself but to give his joy to others, not in any way to serve himself but in every way to serve mankind. This glorious phrase, "*Non ministrari sed ministrare*," is the motto of Wellesley College, and may well be made the motto of all young people as they go out into the world. It is the Christ way, the way of all true success. **And to give his life a ransom for many.** Christ's first disciples had no question about the meaning of these words. "His own self," said Peter, "bare our sins in his body upon the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). "Herein is love," said John, "not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "He loved me," said Paul, "and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). "The truth cannot be put too simply: 'God forgives our sins because Christ died for them'; 'in that death of Christ our condemnation came upon him, that for us there might be condemnation no more'; 'the forfeiting of his free life has freed our forfeited lives' (Denny).

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned he stood;
Sealed my pardon with his blood;
Alleluia! what a saviour!

If this is true, the New Testament has a meaning, and we sinful men have a gospel. If it is not true, it is difficult to know why the New Testament was written, and still more difficult to know what we must do to be saved." — *Rev. George Jackson*. "When one sees the vision and feels the power of Calvary all the problems of life become solved, because the great problem is taken away." — *Rev. William Thomson Hanzsche*.

CHRIST'S STANDARD OF GREATNESS. "The Son of Man came to minister, let him minister. It is his pleasure to serve, let him serve. It is his joy to give, let him give. We, perhaps, would like to be always serving like Martha, bustling about

our little activities. There was a better part than even serving Jesus, a better part which Mary chose." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.*

"It is not the hardest life — this of free service. The hard life is that passed in wrestling an unwilling homage and tribute from the world." — *Rev. Wilfred S. Hackett.*

"Christ came, strong with deliberate intention, the intention to help. This motive alone, this and no other, drove him out of his Father's home into our troubled ways." — *H. S. Holland.*

"The great difficulty with Christians is to get them to say, 'We are able.' Everything they are commanded to do is too hard. 'We are not able.' All things are possible to them that have faith, and a will to do them. All good things can be gained by those who have a will to try for them. The Duke of Osuna was governor of Madrid. At that time the town was infested with swarms of idle fellows who pretended to be cripples, and hung about the corners of the streets, begging. The duke ordered the police to sweep the whole crew into his hall. They saw that a rope was stretched across the hall. Then the duke flung a handful of money over the rope, and said, 'Take that, cripples! Over the rope with you!' At once, away went the crutches and sticks, and the beggars leaped the ropes, and the lame ran, and those with stiff and twisted arms stretched out both to seize the money. Only a few remained behind unable to clear the rope. 'Ah!' said the duke to the police; 'you see the true cripples from those who are impostors. Carry off all the impostors and drive them to the mines.' Now I tell all of you that you are every bit as much impostors before God if you do not work for his glory and your own sanctification. You are able, Christ being your helper." — *Rev. S. Baring-Gould.*

"True vicarious service is possible when a life is willing to make itself of no reputation. Colin H. Livingstone, president of the Boy Scouts of America, said: 'A woman selling newspapers was caught in a gust of wind and her papers torn from her grasp. A Boy Scout ran forward and picked them up for her, and as he handed them to the aged woman she said to him, "You are a gentleman." "No, I am a Scout," he replied. "What is your name?" I asked, as I happened to be near and saw the good turn. "That would spoil it. Good night, sir," and the boy disappeared.' That boy had in him the very poetry of religion." — *Rev. J. Frank Smith, D.D.*

"O mother at thy prayers! O father whose heart is set upon the future of your boy! O master giving the best years of life for the boys! look not thou down, but up. What is your real prayer for your boy, or, at any rate, what ought it to be? That he may be of use in the Master's work; that he may be an instrument in his hand; that in the boy's life and work the Master may see something of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. In that true sense, pray the prayer that he may sit on his right hand or his left; but, if that be the prayer, then leave him in the Lord's hand to mould." — *Bishop A. F. W. Ingram.*



LESSON VII (20). — May 13.

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM. — Mark II: 1-33.

PRINT vs. 1-10, 15-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation.* — ZECH. 9:9.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 24 : 7-10.

Primary Topic : HAILING JESUS AS KING.

Lesson Material : Mark II : I-10.

Memory Verse : Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Luke 19 : 38.

Junior Topic : HAILING JESUS AS KING.

Lesson Material : Mark II : I-10.

Memory Verse : Luke 19 : 38.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE KINGLY QUALITIES OF JESUS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS ASSERTS MESSIANIC AUTHORITY.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will use the sand map, constructing Bethany and Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, together with the Kidron valley and the Jerusalem eminence with the temple on its eastern promontory. Bring in the children's hosannas, and show the boys and girls that Christ needs them to-day, even as he needed the colt for which he sent.

The Older Classes have in this lesson, in all its parts, illustrations of the great truth that Christ has a royal and absolute right to all our possessions and talents, our strength and time and interest. Apply this truth to our money, our business, our social life, to politics, and to the support of the church. When we all learn to "make Jesus King," the kingdom of heaven will come.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What chiefly stands in the way of Christ's universal sway ?

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The use of animals in Palestine in Christ's day.
Christ and prophecy.
Events of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.
The first and second cleansing of the temple compared.
The uniqueness of the fig-tree miracle.
Christ's assertions of his authority.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Sunday, April 2, A.D. 30, in the last week before Christ's crucifixion.

Place. — The Mount of Olives (Bethany and Bethphage). The temple in Jerusalem.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus the King.

I. THE TRIUMPH OF THE KING, vs. I-10.

The loan of the colt.
Palms and hosannas.
Make Jesus King.

II. THE KING IN THE TEMPLE, vs. II-26.

The withered fig-tree.
The traffickers rebuked.
The coming of the King.

III. THE KING'S AUTHORITY, vs. 27-33.

The rulers question Jesus.
Christ's counter question.
The source of the King's authority.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Wright's *The Heart of the Master*. Aitken's *Easter-tide*. Morrison's *The Wind on the Heath*. Black's "According to My Gospel." Burrell's *The Golden Passional*. Bowie's *The Road of the Star*. Zahn's *Bread and Salt from the Word of God*. Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. Liddon's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. Phillips Brooks's *Sermons for the Church Year*. Baring-Gould's *Village Preaching for a Year*. First Series, Vol. 1. Hansen's *Wandering Stars*. Glazebrook's *Prospice*. Gregg's *New Epistles from Old Lands*. Buxton's *The Old Road*.

1. And when they draw nigh unto Jerusalem, unto Beth'-phagē and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth two of his disciples,

I. THE TRIUMPH OF THE KING, vs. I-10. As the transfiguration scene gave a glimpse of the heavenly glory which Christ left in order to come to earth on his mission of mercy, so his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem gives us some idea of the earthly power and splendor which might have been his for the asking. He definitely rejected it when tempted with it at the beginning of his public ministry and later when the multitude offered him a crown ; but now, within a few days of his crucifixion, he accepted the regal homage of the Jerusalem crowd as his due, for it could no longer injure his work. "I am a king," he was soon to declare to Pilate, "but my kingdom is not of this world." Our lesson is to show us what kind of king he was — and is. "If the birth of Jesus was his advent to the whole world, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem was his advent to the Jewish people. He who had so often spoken to them in parables, of which they did not see the whole meaning, now came to them with an acted parable, which they could not fail to understand." — Canon M. G. Glazebrook.

1. And when they draw nigh unto Jerusalem. Christ and his twelve disciples, going up to Jerusalem for the last time before the Saviour's crucifixion, had walked

2. And saith unto them, Go your way into the village that is over against you: and straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him.

3. And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him back hither.

the fifteen miles from Jericho, where they were last noted. It is an uphill walk, over a dangerous road infested by robbers who lurked in the caves on the hillsides — the road where the traveller was rescued by the Good Samaritan of Christ's parable. **Unto Bethphage.** Bethphage, "the house of figs," was a village near Bethany on a



Road to Bethphage.

Fig-trees in the foreground.

slope of the Mount of Olives. Not a trace of it has been discovered by explorers. **And Bethany.** This village lies on the Jericho-Jerusalem road, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and a little less than two miles from Jerusalem. Its name means "the House of Dates" or "a Low Place." Here lived Lazarus, whom Christ raised from the dead, with his sisters Martha and

Mary, the beloved family whom the Lord so often visited as he went to Jerusalem. Here also lived Simon the Leper. The modern name is El-Azariyeh, "the Place of Lazarus," and it is a miserable hamlet consisting of about twenty houses in which live Bedouin Arabs. **At the mount of Olives.** This mount, sometimes called Olivet, is a limestone ridge east of Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the valley of the Kidron. It rises about 200 feet above the temple area, and is more than 2,600 feet above the Mediterranean. The ridge has three summits, the middle one being the Mount of Olives proper, that to the north being Mount Scopus and the southern being the Mount of Offence. **He sendeth two of his disciples.** Mark tells more about this errand than the other evangelists, so that probably Peter was one of these disciples; and with him probably, as usual, went John.

2. **And saith unto them, Go your way into the village that is over against you.** This village was probably Bethphage, as Matt. 21:1, 2 seems to indicate. **And straightway as ye enter into it.** Another of Mark's "straightways," and see also the next verse. Here it means that the colt will be found at the very entrance of the village from Bethany. Christ's directions are explicit. **Ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat.** "Christ brings into play his power of prophecy, just as he did a few days after when he told the disciples to follow a man bearing a pitcher of water, who would show them the way to the room prepared for the last supper. He already sees the ass and the foal in the street of Bethphage and he sends for them. That he should contemplate riding at all is remarkable; there is no earlier or later notice in the Gospels of his moving from place to place, except by walking. To walk was the symbol of his poverty, and of his independence. Now, however, he will ride on an ass, and there is reason for his doing so. He sends for the ass and the foal because the prophet Zechariah introduced these animals into his description of the coming of the King of Zion to his own city, and in a prophecy which the Jewish interpreters from the first applied to the Messiah." — *H. P. Liddon*. **Loose him, and bring him.** Jesus foresees that the owner will make no objection; he was doubtless a friend of Jesus, and a Christian.

3. **And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this?** Not the owner of the colt, but some watchful bystander. **Say ye, The Lord hath need of him.** The man knew who "the Lord" was, and owed him allegiance. Perhaps Christ had healed him of

4. And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door without in the open street; and they loose him.

5. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6. And they said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go.

7. And they bring the colt unto Jesus, and cast on him their garments; and he sat upon him.

some terrible disease or had worked a healing miracle for some loved one. At any rate, it was enough for him to know the Lord's desire, and he would grant it. This is Christ's own definition of his friends, that they do whatever he commands. We should count it the highest of all honors that the King requisitions anything that we have. **And straightway he will send him back hither.** Here is a text for all borrowers! Who can doubt that our Lord saw that this promise was carried out? Not to return what is borrowed, sending it back promptly and in good condition, is to give evil for good, and seriously to lessen the world's supply of good will for the future.

4. **And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door without in the open street; and they loose him.** The colt was "without," that is, outside the courtyard. It was, literally, "in the round-about road," the narrow alley which was the only way around the house. It was an ass's colt, and the mother was with it, but not tied. The ass was a royal animal, was associated with many great men of Old Testament times (Abraham, the Judges, Moses, etc.), was a symbol of peace, the horse being a symbol of war. For these reasons it was precisely adapted to carry the Prince of Peace.

5. **And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?** A reasonable and proper question. Most of us are too lacking in public spirit to protest when our neighbor's rights are assailed or seem to be. "It's none of our business," we say selfishly.

6. **And they said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go.** Christ's authority was communicated to his disciples. Every one in that neighborhood knew who "the Lord" was, and probably the Twelve also were well known. A bare statement that the Lord had need of the animal sufficed.

7. **And they bring the colt unto Jesus.** "Leading an ass along the public highway! There are but very few in this community who would do that. But these two disciples did it, and they did it willingly. In doing that they helped to fulfil one of the prophecies which established the Messiahship of their Master. Had they refused to do that, they would have missed one of the grand opportunities of their life. Are you willing to humble yourself for Jesus Christ, and to do humble things in his service? If not, you are retarding the progress of his kingdom, and are beating back the hosannas which are rising to the lips of men." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.* **And cast on him their garments.** Matthew tells us that the disciples threw their cloaks over both the colt and its mother, evidently to serve as saddles, and also to honor Jesus. In the same way the captains surrendered their garments to the use of Jehu when he was made king (2 Kings 9: 13). **And he sat upon him.** Matthew tells us that the ass was brought to Jesus as well as the colt, and he selected the colt. "I suggest he made this choice as a quiet assertion of his majesty. He chose, and



From a photograph.

A Syrian Ass and Foal of an Ass.

8. And many spread their garments upon the way; and others branches, which they had cut from the fields.

he quite deliberately chose, the animal on which man had never sat. That ass had long been used in burden-bearing. It had often carried its master to the market. It had borne his wife and children many a time when they went over the valley to the city. And it may be that when some temple doctor had lingered at Bethphage until the shadows fell, village kindness had conveyed him home mounted on that sleek and comely animal. For wife and children it was good enough.



Triumphal Entry.

For priest or Pharisee nothing could be better. Even for Jesus, in his lowly ministry, it would have been a welcome ease in travelling. But now he was not Jesus but **THE CHRIST**. He was claiming for one brief hour

his royal prerogative, and he lifts himself up into unique supremacy by choosing a beast whereon man had never sat. . . .

Many a youth begins by putting Christ on the saddle where other men have sat. They

put him beside Socrates and Plato, or give him his place by Hegel and by Kant. And then the years go by, and troubles come, and no one can help and save but 'Jesus only':

he is on the colt whereon man had never sat." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"Every reader of Zechariah's prophecy, and there would be no one in Jerusalem who had not read it or heard it a hundred times, would be immediately reminded that Jesus was silently appealing to the judgment of the city by making an entry of this kind. The words would immediately occur to them, the familiar passionate words, 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass!' Our Western minds are entirely unaccustomed to this symbolic mode of appeal. The modern parallels, I suppose, would be a manifesto issued, placarded on the walls, or circulated from hand to hand; a proclamation from an aspirant to the throne, dictating the policy which was to be; or, in this day — our own prosaic day — it would be some stirring letter in the morning papers, to reach the intelligence of a city or a nation. The claim to be Messiah was conveyed to Jerusalem in the form of the entry of Jesus." — *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

8. And many spread their garments upon the way. Thus Sir Walter Raleigh, when Queen Elizabeth came to a muddy place, did not hesitate, but drew his costly cloak from his shoulders and threw it down for her to walk over. "We want to make Jesus king. We want him to reign instead of hate and greed and selfish ambition and such things which produce the wars and strifes and misery in this world. But to-day, just as when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday, it costs to give Jesus a triumph. We have to spread our garments in the way. That is, we have to give of our possessions and our time as also of our lives in order to get the misery and wretchedness out of the world and in order to get Jesus into it." — *Rev. Andrew Hansen*. And others branches, which they had cut from the fields. The road from Bethany to Jerusalem passed through plantations of palms, olives, figs, and other fruit trees. Carrying out the idea of homage suggested by those that threw down their cloaks for Jesus to pass over, the crowd proceeded to carpet the way with branches from the trees, and some, as the Greek word here used implies,

9. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10. Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, *the kingdom* of our father David: Hosanna in the highest.

twisted the masses of leaves and twigs into rude mats which they laid rejoicingly in the path of the King.

9. **And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna.** In the meantime the news of what was happening spread to Jerusalem, for the people had glimpsed the procession winding down the slope of Olivet, and, as John 12: 12, 13 informs us, a second crowd was quickly formed in the Holy City, poured out of the gates in the great wall, tumbled down into the valley of the Kidron, rushed up to meet the descending host, turned, and preceded it to Jerusalem, waving palm branches and shouting. "Hosanna" means literally "Save (us)." Matthew gives the fuller shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David." **Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.** At the four great national festivals, the Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Dedication, the multitudes sang the six psalms of rejoicing, 113-118. This is from Ps. 118: 26. Luke 19: 38 gives it, "Blessed is the King that cometh," and there are other variations in the four Gospels, as might have been expected, since some groups would shout it one way and some another. "In the name of the Lord" means with the authority, power, and designation of the long-expected Messiah.

10. **Blessed is the kingdom that cometh.** The crowd, with a wild exultation, saw themselves soon to be freed from the hateful bondage imposed by the Romans, with its suppression of their independence of action, with its grinding poverty and bitter oppression. The Jews longed for their own rulers, and for freedom from the alien rule of distant, tyrannical, and dissipated monarchs. **The kingdom of our father David.** David's reign was the greatest the nation had known; under Solomon and Jeroboam II. the country may have extended farther and have been richer, but in each case the seeds of disaster were present, soon to grow into ruin. David's kingdom rightly stood to the Jews as the climax of their history. Not as these shouters anticipated, but in a far nobler and grander fashion, the kingdom which Jesus inaugurated and over which he now rules takes up the glory of David's kingdom and is carrying it to the ends of the earth. **Hosanna in the highest.** In the highest degree, in the highest heaven where God dwells. Compare the song of the angels at Christ's birth, Luke 2: 14.

MAKE JESUS KING. Jesus was King, but he was the Prince of Peace. "The entire pageant, disarming as it did the Romans of their suspicions and postponing as it did for nearly a generation the destruction of the city, mutely asserted, 'Blessed are the peacemakers.'" — *William Burnet Wright.*

"The triumphal chorus that burst forth that day has never died away. Wherever a human heart is reached by Christ, the hosannas burst forth afresh." — *Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken.*

"With absolute fidelity to the prophet's portrait (Zech. 9: 9; Matt. 21: 5) could the Evangelist (Matthew) declare about Christ's last and triumphal entry into Jerusalem that in him was fulfilled the word spoken by the prophet." — *Rev. Hugh Black, D.D.*

"Was it true that the Master had need of an ass's colt for that occasion of triumph? Aye; and for the advancing work of his kingdom he has need of our time, energy, possessions, all that we have and are. He makes a mighty claim because he is our King." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

"People show their contempt for some one by calling him 'an ass.' Well, the King of Glory chose an ass to ride on; 'He hath need of him,' though humble and despised. So he has need of humble and despised people. Jesus was always choosing humble things and making them glorious." — *Rev. H. J. Wilmot-Buxton.*

"If our Lord declared that the shouts of the children in the temple had power to overcome his enemies, of how much greater value must be the hosannas of men and women. All can do something to open a way for the Lord." — *Prof. Theodore Zahn.*

"The kingliness of Jesus involves a cross. The work of the royal entry led on to Gethsemane and Calvary and to the darkness of an heroic pain. And wherever the kingly Christ comes, he comes to teach us that we also must be willing for a crucifixion." — *Rev. Walter Russell Bowie, D.D.*

"Julius Cæsar entered Rome in a car drawn by forty elephants, Mark Antony

15. And they come to Jerusalem: and he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves;

in one to which lions were harnessed, and Aurelian was conveyed to the Capitol in a gilded chariot drawn by four stags. And now the King of kings comes to Zion, lowly and sitting on an ass. What a different triumphal entry here! The Roman victors drew in their trains lines of captives clanking their chains, and weeping in their bondage. He comes with a free multitude going before and following after, praising Him who bringeth the prisoners out of captivity, and drieth away tears from off all faces." — *S. Baring-Gould*.

II. THE KING IN THE TEMPLE, vs. II-26. **THE WITHERED FIG-TREE** (vs. II-14, 19-26). As Christ, during the Passion Week, spent the nights with Lazarus in Bethany, on his way to Jerusalem one morning he noticed a fig-tree clothed in glossy leaves. It was April and the fig usually bears fruit in June, but the fruit precedes the leaves, so that Christ was warranted in expecting to find fresh ripe figs on the tree. But he found on the tree "nothing but leaves," the perfect symbol of a life making fair professions but with no worthy deeds to justify it. Therefore the Lord said to the tree, "No man eat fruit from thee henceforward for ever." The next morning, as they passed, the disciples noticed with awe that the curse had taken effect, "they saw the fig-tree withered away from the roots."

This miracle stands out among Christ's other "signs," elsewhere merciful and beneficent, as a work of destruction. Rather, it was an acted parable. To the disciples, so soon to be sorely tried by grief and persecution, it made clear the resistless power of faith. Faith would enable them, if need be, to remove mountains and cast them into the sea. "*All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*"

The acted parable also had the widest national application, taken in connection with Christ's spoken parable of the barren fig-tree, Luke 13 : 6-9. For three years Christ had sought fruit from the promising tree of Judaism, and he had sought in vain. Sanhedrin, Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, all were loud in professions of holiness, but their hearts were full of bitterness and wickedness. "Why did it cumber the ground?" "It shall be cut down," was the Lord's sad prophecy, and the prophecy was soon fulfilled.

THE TRAFFICKERS REBUKED. 15. **And they come to Jerusalem**. Jesus and his disciples had come from Bethany, where they had spent the night at the hospitable home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary. On the way to the city had occurred the episode of the withered fig-tree. **And he entered into the temple**. In the temple he would meet the largest number of people whom he might teach; moreover, his Father's house was the dearest place in all the world to him. **And began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple**. At the great feasts worshippers came to Jerusalem from many distant lands, to offer the required sacrifices. For their convenience, in the outer court of the temple a market had been established, where animals and birds for the sacrifices could be bought, together with oil, incense, wine, and other sacrificial material. This huckstering was destructive of the quiet and solemnity of the holy place, and was most offensive to Christ. At the outset of his ministry (John 2 : 13-17), in a fierce burst of indignation, Jesus had cleansed the temple of this traffic, but in the intervening years it had grown up again. **And overthrew the tables of the money-changers**. The pretext for this business was the requirement that temple offerings of money and the yearly temple tax of half a shekel due from every Jew, could only be paid in a special coin called a Temple Shekel, not often used outside the temple. To get it the worshippers must exchange their Greek and Roman coins, and their money from Arabia, Persia, and Egypt, and in the transfer the money-changers often availed themselves of the easy opportunity to defraud. No wonder that Christ, in hot wrath, turned over the stalls of these bankers, scattering their base coins about the pavement. **And the seats of them that sold the doves**. "Required for poor women coming for purification (Lev. 12 : 6, 8; Luke 2 : 24) from all parts of the country, and for other offerings. The sale of doves appears to have been in a great measure in the hands of the priests themselves, and one of the high priests especially is said to have gained great profits from his dovecoats on Mount Olivet." — *Cambridge Bible*.

16. And he would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple.

17. And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers.

18. And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and sought how they might destroy him : for they feared him, for all the multitude was astonished at his teaching.

16. **And he would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple.** The temple was a short cut between Jerusalem and the farms and villages on the Mount of Olives, and irreverent people had got into the habit of using its sacred courts as a public street, carrying goods through it, farming implements, baskets, pails, and the like. The Jewish authorities had forbidden it, but the custom persisted.

17. **And he taught, and said unto them.** Addressing the crowd which these bold proceedings had drawn around him. **Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?** The great outer court of the temple which Jesus had purged of the traders, was called the Court of the Gentiles. Men of all nations, whether Jews or not, were welcomed to it. Christ is quoting from Isa. 56 : 7, with emphasis upon "a house of prayer," — not a house of trafficking. **But ye have made it a den of robbers.** Literally, a "cave of robbers," such as Christ had often seen on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho, where bandits lurked and from which they rushed out upon lonely travellers to despoil them.

18. **And the chief priests and the scribes heard it.** The scribes were the lawyers, who recorded, transcribed, and interpreted the laws of Moses. The chief priests included the high priest, all who had been high priests, and the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests who ministered in turn in the temple. Some of these were very likely in the temple when Christ cleared it of the traders, and they would promptly tell the others. **And sought how they might destroy him.** They were touched in their purse, for they gained much from the temple traffic. They were touched also in their pride, for they should have kept the temple free from this sacrilege. Luke 19 : 47 implies that the elders also joined the forces against Jesus, which thus were most formidable. **For they feared him.** They feared his influence with the people ; the reforms he was inaugurating would in time drive them from power, and the many whom they had wronged would seize the opportunity for revenge and punishment. **For all the multitude was astonished at his teaching.** "They hung upon him" (Luke 19 : 48). They were amazed and delighted at the boldness and freshness of Christ's teachings, his fierce opposition to all iniquity, his sympathy with the people, his clear insight into divine teachings, and the manifest authority with which he spoke. While the Saviour thus had the hearts of the multitude it behooved the rulers to proceed against him cautiously, or they would have an insurrection on their hands.

THE COMING OF THE KING. "Without too great fancifulness we may picture the approach of Jesus to our souls under the figure of his entrance into Jerusalem. He comes to one of us as he came to that city of his and of his Father's. Think how sacred it was to him. Think how he loved it. Think what vast precious possibilities he could see sleeping behind its brilliant walls. There was his Father's temple. There was the whole machinery for making the complete manhood. And yet there was defiance, selfishness, unspirituality, and cruelty — the house of prayer turned into the den of thieves. O my dear friends, if Christ, as he comes to any one of us to offer his salvation, never forgets for a moment what we might be in the sight of what we are, and never forgets for a moment what we are in the vision of what we might be ; if he always sees our sins in the light of our chances, and our chances against the shadow of our sins, then what Jerusalems we must be to him ! He loves us as he loved that city, with a love full of reproach and accusation." — *Phillips Brooks*.

III. THE KING'S AUTHORITY, vs. 27-33. **THE RULERS QUESTION CHRIST.** Christ's triumphal entry into the city aroused against him all the ruling classes among the Jews, and as he walked about in the temple, doubtless teaching by conversation, he was assailed by a group of chief priests, scribes, and elders, who asked

him by what authority he did such things as entering Jerusalem amid shouts appropriate to a king or to the Messiah and driving the traders from the temple. The query was artful, for Christ could hardly avoid answering it, and yet any direct answer he could make would throw him into the clutches of the rulers. *They* had not delegated authority to him, most certainly; and if he claimed to be acting as the Son of God and with divine authority, they would at once bring against him the charge of blasphemy, the penalty being death.

CHRIST'S COUNTER QUESTION. The reply given by Jesus was a masterpiece of argument. He asked them whether the act of John the Baptist in baptizing converts had back of it divine or human authority. They dared not say "divine," for they had rejected John; nor "human," for they feared the multitude of John's devoted followers. Therefore they took the coward's course and declared that they did not know, thus proving themselves unworthy to be the religious leaders of the people, for it was their business to know and to declare.

"Jesus does more than silence them; he answers them. His question is no irrelevant riddle by which he meets a difficulty and delays the necessity of a reply. He definitely implies that the authority of John was divine, and that his own authority is the same; but as they were afraid to deny the divine authority of John they are powerless to deny that of Jesus; and, further, if they had accepted the message of John, they would be prepared to accept Jesus. It is true that if we are afraid to accept the logical conclusions of our doubts and denials, we never can hope to discover truth." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.*

THE SOURCE OF THE KING'S AUTHORITY. This lesson has a message for every life. We may deny Christ, but that does not make him less real. We may disobey Christ, but that does not diminish his absolute sovereignty. We may live in rebellion against him, but still he is King of kings and Lord of lords. The fulness of the God-head dwells in him. Without him was nothing made that was made, and he has a right to all things that he has created. Every least word of his has authority infinitely greater than all acts of Parliament or of Congress. "Thus saith the Lord" has sufficed for the great and good of all ages, and it should suffice for us.

LESSON VIII (21). — May 20.

JESUS TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE. — Mark 12:13-44.

PRINT Mark 12:13-17, 28-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He taught them as one having authority.* — MATT. 7:29.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 119:1-8.

Primary Topic: JESUS ANSWERS SOME HARD QUESTIONS.

Lesson Material: Mark 12:1-10, 28-31.

Memory Verse: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Mark 12:29.

Junior Topic: JESUS TEACHES GREAT DUTIES.

Lesson Material: Mark 12:1-10, 28-31.

Memory Verse: Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. Mark 12:17.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: JESUS ANSWERS HIS CRITICS.

Topic for Young People and Adults: LOVE, THE LAW OF THE KINGDOM.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will understand the matter of the coin, especially if it is illustrated by one of our own coins, and they are shown what our government does for them in maintaining order, making the streets safe, furnishing water, light, education, preventing epidemics, conducting courts, keeping up parks,

museums, public libraries, and much besides. Try to cultivate in your pupils a sense of social obligation and true patriotism as a part of their religion. Show them that "love to man" is the other side of "love to God."

The Older Classes will make this lesson a study in Christ's methods of teaching as an example for us in our dealing with inquirers. Many great questions are

involved : the Christian's relation to the state, his relation to the next life, his relation to his fellow men, his relation to God. It is one of the widest lessons we could consider.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
In what ways can the church help "Cæsar" in his rule, and how can "Cæsar" help the church ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30, in the week before Christ's crucifixion.

Place. — The temple at Jerusalem.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Love the Law of the Kingdom.

I. A QUESTION OF TRIBUTE, vs. 13-17.

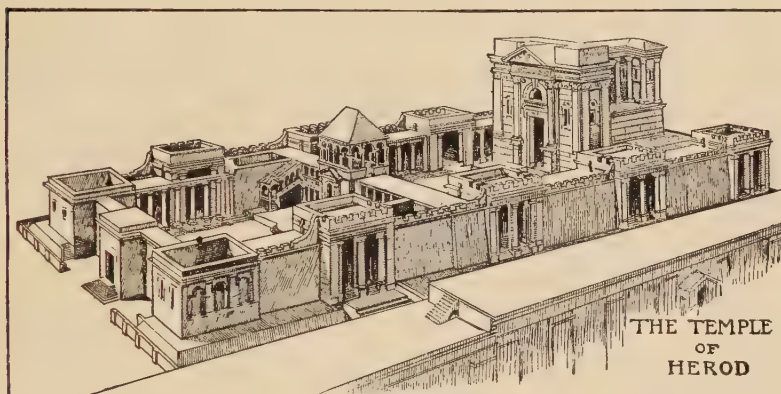
Tribute to Cæsar.
Tribute to God.
Worldliness and other-worldliness.

II. A QUESTION OF THE NEXT LIFE, vs. 18-27.

No marriage in heaven.
The God of the living.

III. A QUESTION OF COMMANDMENTS, vs. 28-44.

Love sums up the law.
The common people heard gladly.



THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Jewish sects in the time of Christ.
Christ's teachings regarding the secular life.
Jesus as a patriot.
Christ's teachings concerning the next life.
Christ's summaries of religion.
Jesus as a debater.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Wright's *The Heart of the Master*. Horton's *The Cartoons of St. Mark*. Payson's *Works*, Vol. 3. Walpole's *St. Mark*. Green in *The Westminster New Testament*. Milner's *St. Mark*. Erdman's *The Gospel of Mark*. Park's *Sermons*, Memorial Collection. Boardman's *University Lectures on the Ten Commandments*. Rice's *Commentary on Mark*. Chalmers's *Sermons*, Vol. 1.

13. And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Hē-rō'-dī-āns, that they might catch him in talk.

I. A QUESTION OF TRIBUTE, vs. 13-17. We studied last week the beginning of the attack made upon Jesus in the temple on Tuesday of Passion Week. That beginning was made by the chief priests, scribes, and elders, and they were completely repulsed. It was necessary, however, for the Jewish leaders to discredit Jesus with the people, for otherwise they would not dare proceed with their murderous plans against him ; therefore they continued their questions, but put them forward through different parties than those so thoroughly confuted before.

13. And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians. "They" were the Jewish authorities and leaders, all combined against Jesus though usually the various groups here mentioned were at swords' points. The Pharisees we have often seen mentioned ; they were the strict theologians and the ardent patriots, the popular party. The Herodians were men of the court, partisans of the royal family of Herod, ruling elsewhere in Palestine and very powerful in Jerusalem also, though at the time a Roman governor was in authority there. "Of the Herodians little is known, but we may safely infer that they were controlled by politicians who schemed to bring all the territory which Herod the Great had ruled under the

14. And when they were come, they say unto him, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one; for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

15. Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why make ye trial of me? bring me a denarius, that I may see it.

sovereignty of one of his descendants. This was ultimately accomplished in the reign of Claudius. It is probably because the Herodians, like all politicians who are politicians only, worked in the dark, that we know so little about them." — *William Burnet Wright*. That they might catch him in talk. They had access to the wisest teacher of the world's history, and their only desire was to trip him up in his statements, to catch him asleep and entrap him. So is it with many still who read Christian books and hear Christian sermons, not to learn the truth, but if possible to discover errors. They are seeking not gold but fool's gold.

14. And when they were come, they say unto him, Teacher, we know that thou art true. They sought to put Christ off his guard by means of flattery. "You are a teller of the truth," they said in effect; "therefore you will not hesitate to give your honest opinion, no matter whom it may offend." "I am the Truth," Christ once said, and in addressing him thus the Pharisees and Herodians spoke the truth, though with a false motive. And carest not for any one. It was true that Christ was absolutely independent of human judgment, for he himself was the Judge over all; but it was not at all true that he cared not for any one. He was deeply concerned regarding the opinions of men, and asked his disciples most solicitously about men's thought about himself; but it was for their sakes and not for his own sake. For thou regardest not the person of men. This also was true of Christ in a sense: he did not concern himself with differences in rank or family or wealth or influence; he praised the poor widow for her two mites, he ate with publicans and sinners, he called Herod "that fox." Taken literally, however, our Lord regarded every person, for each was the possessor of an immortal soul, and he was to die on the cross to open up eternal life to all. But of a truth teachest the way of God. They were ready to admit that Jesus taught the right way, but they were not ready to admit his declaration that he was the Way, and that no one could come to the Father except by him. Their apparent acceptance of Christ was no acceptance at all, and in this they were like many religious teachers and writers of the present day. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? "Cæsar" was the title of the Roman Emperor, "Kaiser" and "Czar" being modern forms of the word. Augustus Cæsar, the first Roman Emperor, ruled at the time of Christ's birth; the Cæsar at this time was Tiberius, the second Emperor, the stepson, son-in-law, and adopted son of Augustus. "Tribute" here is equivalent to "taxes."

15. Shall we give, or shall we not give? The repeated question indicates their eagerness, and perhaps also that the query was put forward separately by the Pharisees and the Herodians, the former, as the popular party, being opposed to the payment, and the latter, as the court party, favoring it. It was a matter of common discussion and of bitter dispute, not unlike the question of taxation without representation which started our American revolution and separation from Great Britain. If Christ sided with the Herodians and declared in favor of paying the tax, he would be proclaimed as disloyal to the cause of the common people and the nation, a traitor and no patriot. If he sided with the Pharisees and asserted that the tax should not be paid, he would at once be charged before Pilate, the Roman governor, as guilty of sedition. It would be impossible to devise a question more crafty, more likely to bring Jesus into difficulties no matter how it was answered. But he, knowing their hypocrisy. Their hypocrisy lay in their pretending one thing, namely, a desire for the true course,



Roman Denarius.

16. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17. And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they marvelled greatly at him.

while really intending a quite different thing, namely, to involve him in some trouble by his answer. As it was, they twisted his answer, in giving testimony at his trial, into exactly the opposite of what it was (Luke 23 : 2). Matthew (22 : 18) says that Jesus perceived their "wickedness"; Luke (20 : 23) calls it their "craftiness." Both are correct. **Said unto them, Why make ye trial of me?** He saw at once that they were not coming to him as learners to a teacher, but as inquisitors to one whom they would entrap. **Bring me a denarius, that I may see it.** The denarius was a Roman silver coin, and the taxes were in terms of it and paid with it. It was worth (at different times) from fifteen to seventeen cents. It was the day's wages of a common laborer, and so had a purchasing power about equal to two dollars with us.

16. **And they brought it.** "Other local money, not bearing the Emperor's image, was in common use, but the denarius had to be fetched." — *Prof. S. W. Green*. They could easily get one in the Court of the Gentiles, to which probably the money-changers promptly returned. **And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?** The obverse of the denarius bore the head of the Emperor Tiberius, surrounded by the inscription, in abbreviated Latin words : *Tiberius Caesar, Divi Augusti filius Augustus, Imperator*, "Tib rius Cæsar, the august son of the divine Augustus, Emperor." "The image of the emperor would be regarded by the stricter Jews as idolatrous, and to spare their feelings the Romans had allowed a special coinage to be struck for Judæa, without any likeness upon it, and only the name of the Emperor, and such Jewish emblems as palms, lilies, grapes, and censers." — *Cambridge Bible*. **And they said unto him, Cæsar's.** The Roman coin stood for the Roman government, for the order which Rome maintained, for its impartial courts, its powerful army holding barbarians at bay, its matchless roads, its swift communications, its security of trade, its permanence and solidity. In using the Roman coin, one accepted all that it signified of material advantage. The student will recall the uniformly high character of the Roman centurions mentioned in the New Testament.

17. **And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.** "With the spirit of this teaching compare Peter's advice : 'Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king as supreme . . . Fear God. Honor the king.' 1 Pet. 2 : 13 f." — *Rev. A. S. Walpole*. Christ meant that, in return for the worldly blessings conferred by Rome, it was right to make payment in the form of taxes, and that such a payment did not conflict with complete allegiance to God in return for the heavenly blessings which God conferred. "It is not the whole of life to 'render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's'; one must also 'render unto God the things that are God's.' The latter higher allegiance includes the former. The enemies of Jesus suggested a conflict of duties; he showed that there was perfect harmony. He intimated, however, that there was danger of forgetting God, and our obligations to him of trust, service, worship, love. The true basis for citizenship is devotion to God, and no political theory or party allegiance can be taken as a substitute for loyalty to him."



Tribute to Cæsar.

Titian.

— *Prof. Charles R. Erdman.* And they marvelled greatly at him. Our Lord had indeed made a wonderfully sagacious reply. He had not only extricated himself from what seemed an impossible dilemma, answering his opponents and putting them to rout, but he had laid down a wise and fundamental principle for the church of all ages. Socrates, with all his skill in questions and answers, has nowhere a passage at arms equal to this.

WORLDLINESS AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS. Christ eluded the question of the Herodians not with a trick but on principle. The principle is this : "The Kingdom of God sides with no form of government, with no social class, with no party. It moves in another sphere altogether. In vain will you try to pin it to monarchy or republicanism ; in vain will you try to use it as a sanction for Conservatives or Liberals ; in vain will you seek to fashion from it a weapon for Capital or for Labor ; it will be no man's badge, because it is destined to be the banner of all men. The burning question which Christ propounds, the question of the Kingdom all along, is this : 'What is due to God ? What tribute, annual, weekly, daily, is due to God ?'"

— *Rev. Robert F. Horton, D.D.*

"How great, how incalculable, is the debt which we have contracted, both to God and to men ! We have not even rendered to men the things that are men's, much less have we rendered to God the things that are his. Every day, every hour of our waking existence we have withheld something both from God and from men which was due to them. Every day and hour, therefore, our debt to him is increasing. Well then may our Saviour represent us as owing a debt of ten thousand talents. Well may God accuse us of robbing and defrauding him." — *Edward Payson.*

"Civil and religious duties need not clash. They can be as distinct as the Roman denarius and the Jewish shekel." — *Rev. G. E. J. Milner.*

II. A QUESTION OF THE NEXT LIFE, vs. 18-27. **NO MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN.** Christ having refuted the Pharisees and Herodians, another party came forward to attack him, the Sadducees. This party, probably named from David's faithful priest Zadok, was small in number, but wealthy. It consisted mainly if not entirely of the chief priests and their families, and in driving the traders from the temple Christ had affronted them especially. The New Testament has few references to them. They did not believe that the dead rise again, they denied the existence of angels and spirits (Acts 23 : 8), they did not believe in God's providence or in future rewards and punishments.

These Sadducees came to Christ with one of their casuistical arguments. Moses in Deut. 25 : 5, 6 had provided that, in order to prevent the extinction of families, when a man who had no son should die, his brother should marry his widow, and if a son should come from the marriage he should be counted in the family register as being the son of the dead man. The Sadducees supposed the case of seven brothers, who in accordance with this married the same woman one after the other, each brother dying soon after the marriage. Now whose wife should she be in the resurrection ? the quibbling Sadducees inquired.

Our Lord gave two answers. In the first place, he said, they were not to limit the power of the Creator by imagining only the state of being found on earth, for in the next life there is no marrying, but men are in the same condition as the blessed angels in heaven. Thus Christ hit at two of the infidelities of the Sadducees, and implied a knowledge of the future world which no mere man could possibly possess. It is not a world of the senses but of the spirit. It is a world of love, but not of carnal love. Friendships, we may be sure, are deeper there than on the earth, but they are freed from all earthly limitations. This is one of the very few glimpses of our heavenly state granted us by Jesus, but it is a very wonderful glimpse, picturing an exalted life for which we shall do well to make preparation while on this earth.

THE GOD OF THE LIVING. The second part of Christ's reply struck directly at the Sadducean denial of the resurrection, and refuted that sect by a single conclusive quotation from the Old Testament, the portion describing God's interview with Moses out of the burning bush (Ex. 3 : 6). At that time, when the great Hebrew leader needed all divine encouragement for his fearful task, Jehovah revealed himself to him as "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." It would be poor comfort to Moses to declare that God was the God of dust and ashes. "The dead are non-existent, and cannot be said to have a God ; hence if God is the God of the living, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are living." — *Edwin W. Rice.* God's statement placed the great men of the past alongside Moses as sympathetic witnesses of his struggles, as his partners and co-workers. They were the "great

28. And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all?

29. Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel ; The Lord our God, the Lord is one :

30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.

cloud of witnesses (Heb. 12 : 1) who have sustained all of God's servants in their high endeavors, and who often sustained Christ himself, as was made evident on the Mount of Transfiguration. Our Lord was warranted in saying to the skeptical Sadducees, "Ye do greatly err."

III. A QUESTION OF COMMANDMENTS, vs. 28-44. 28. **And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together.** He was a Pharisee, as we learn from Matthew, and was learned in the law (Matt. 22 : 34, 35). **And knowing that he had answered them well.** Being a Pharisee, he was pleased to witness the discomfiture of the opposing sects. **Asked him, What commandment is the first of all?** This was a test question, as Matt. 22 : 35 tells us. He did not mean the first commandment in the order of the Decalogue, for any child could have told that, but what commandment is first in importance, in spiritual value? Jewish scholars often debated this question.

29. **Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel ; The Lord our God, the Lord is one.** "It is a very weighty saying. First, it asserts that Jehovah, the Covenant God of Israel, is Deity absolute ; the self-existent, eternal, unchangeable, spiritual, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, holy, just, true, gracious, perfect, infinite God. Secondly, it asserts that this infinite Jehovah is absolutely one, being himself an infinite unity, all his infinite perfections being in infinite equilibrium. God's very blessedness consists in this infinite equipoise of himself. Thirdly, it asserts that there is only one true God — namely, Jehovah, Covenant God of Israel. This sublime annunciation marks a colossal onward stride in the history of religion ; for monotheism, or the doctrine that there is but one God, is the basal stone of Christian worship. And for this doctrine of monotheism we are indebted to the Jew. The Mosaic theology is the one solitary religion of antiquity whose corner stone was this : 'Jehovah our Elohim, Jehovah one.' The singleness and unity of God is still the corner stone of theology." — *George Dana Boardman.*

30. **And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.** The first commandment quoted by Jesus was from "the Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue (Deut. 6 : 4, 5), and from that part of it which not only had the foremost place in the code, but was repeated twice every day by all Jews, and was carried about by the strictest of them in their phylacteries — the two small leather boxes worn, the one on the forehead and the other on the left arm (Matt. 23 : 1, etc.). Our Lord may have pointed, as he spoke, to such a phylactery on the person of the scribe himself." — *New Century Bible.* "Heart" signifies the emotions and affections, "soul" the will and the personality, "mind" is the intellect, and "strength" the bodily powers. In short, man's whole being is to be employed in loving service of his heavenly Father. No corner of his nature is to be reserved for any other use.



Phylacteries.

Worn on the forehead.

31. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32. And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Teacher, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he:

33. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

31. **The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.** Christ quotes from Lev. 19 : 18. This second commandment is "like unto" the first (Matt. 22 : 39), of a piece with it, its natural corollary, since no one can love God with all his being without loving God's other children with all his being, namely, as completely as he loves himself. Our Lord's first commandment corresponds to the first table of the Decalogue, our duties toward God, and his second commandment corresponds to the second table of the Decalogue, our duties toward men. Our "neighbor," as Christ made clear in his parable of the good Samaritan, is not merely the person living near us, but includes any one, near or far, who may need us. **There is none other commandment greater than these.** In Matthew we are told (Matt. 22 : 40) that all the law and the prophets, that is, the entire Bible, hang on these two commandments. God is love, and as love animates and controls our lives we become more and more like God, and more and more pleasing in his sight.

32. **And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Teacher, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he.** The Greek is stronger and more enthusiastic: "Well said, Teacher! Truly hast thou said," etc. The scribe, himself a master of the law, could appreciate Christ's masterly analysis and condensation of it all.

33. **And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength.** The scribe omits "with all the soul," since the heart, understanding and strength may be regarded as making up the entire being, the soul. **And to love his neighbor as himself.** Here is where Christ's opponents would have found it hardest to follow Christ in their lives, but this scribe was of a brotherly nature. **Is much more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.** Burnt-offerings and other sacrifices, with the many regulations for each, formed a very large part of the life of the strict Jew, but this scribe had read deeply enough in the Book, especially such passages as 1 Sam. 15 : 22; Hos. 6 : 6; Mic. 6 : 6-8; Ps. 51, to realize that the great prophet in whose presence he stood was in harmony with all the other Jewish prophets in his emphasis on practical love as supreme over merely formal religion.

34. **And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.** The scribe was almost a Christian, but not quite. He was near the bridegroom's house like the virgins in the parable, but he might be shut out. "Almost — but lost." One who is not far from the kingdom of God may in the end be as far from it as the most terrible sinner. "Some imagine themselves to be really Christians, being misled by the fact that they are almost persuaded to be such. Their nearness deceives them. The counterfeit money is almost exactly like the true coin." — *Prof. Edwards A. Park.* **And no man after that durst ask him any question.** But Christ himself became the questioner (verse 35). He issued a warning against the misleading views of the scribes who had been examining him in hostile fashion. "How is it," he asked, "that the scribes can say that the long-expected Messiah is the son of David, a mere man, and not also the Son of God?" Then he quoted from Ps. 110 : 1, which the Jews regarded as David's own psalm and as referring to the Messiah; but in that psalm David calls the Messiah "my Lord," a term he would not use in relation to a being who was only his son. This refutation Christ followed with a warning against the character of the scribes, their pride and vainglory, their hypocritical long prayers, their cruel oppression of the poor. There was only an empty form of religion, and Jesus condemned it absolutely. These teachings were most welcome to "the common people" (margin, "the great multitude"). They had suffered long under their false leaders, and they rejoiced in a teacher whose voice rang true, and who spoke with divine authority.

THE COMMON PEOPLE HEARD GLADLY. "The common people of Jerusalem heard gladly, and we need not repeat the awful disaster and ruin which, in the course of a few years, overtook the families of that common people. . . . You may hear gladly; but what does it avail, if you do not follow faithfully?" — *Thomas Chalmers*. There are many who have "itching ears" and delight in skilful pulpit oratory, but the truth does not sink into their hearts. They obey only the easy part, the part they like; they will not take up the cross and follow Jesus. Let us listen eagerly to the voice of Jesus, and let us take heed how we hear. To hear obediently is better than to hear gladly.

LESSON IX (22). — May 27.

THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. — Mark 12: 1-12; 13: 1-37.

PRINT Mark 12: 1-12.

(May Be Used with Temperance Applications.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.* — Ps. 1: 6.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 1.

Primary Topic: SOME WICKED PEOPLE PUNISHED.

Lesson Material: Mark 12: 1-12.

Memory Verse: *Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.* Ps. 1: 6.

Junior Topic: THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.

Lesson Material: Mark 12: 1-12.

Memory Verse: *Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.* Ps. 1: 6.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: PLAYING FAIR WITH GOD.

Topic for Young People and Adults: THE MISUSE OF NATIONAL PRIVILEGE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be spared the most terrible details of this parable, but they are not too young to learn that all sin brings fearful penalties, that a life of obedience to God and love of Christ is required of every one, and that a child may accept Christ or reject him. Emphasize the faithfulness that Christ desires, and the fruit that every Christian life should bear.

The Older Classes have the great Christian teachings relating to the final judgment, Christ's second coming, the punishment of the wicked, and the faithfulness that Christ requires of every true Christian. This lesson should get down to the fundamental realities of life here and of the eternal life. Though a stern lesson, one of the most terrible in the Bible, no Christian should flinch from it, for it contains truths the most necessary for all men to realize.

Question Suggested for Discussion: How should we be preparing our homes and community for the second coming of Christ?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Elmslie's *Expository Lectures and Sermons*. Richards's *God's Choice of Men*. Wright's *The Heart of the Master*. Payson's *Works*, Vol. 3. Norwood's *The Cross and the Garden*. Hansen's *Wandering Stars*.

Horton's *The Caroons of St. Mark*. Maclaren's *Sermons, First Series*. Works on the parables by Taylor and Dods. Principal Stewart in *The Parables of Jesus*, by various authors.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30, Christ's last day of public teaching.

Place. — The temple in Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The story of the fall of Jerusalem.
Christ's teachings about the final judgment.
Vineyard references in the Bible.
Christ's warnings.
Christ's second coming.
False leaders of Christ's day and in later times.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Vineyard and the Master.

I. THE STORY OF THE UNFAITHFUL HUSBANDMEN, Mark 12: 1-12.

The owner seeking fruits.
The treatment of the messengers.
The treatment of the son.
The sure penalty of wickedness.

II. "TAKE YE HEED," Mark 13: 1-37.

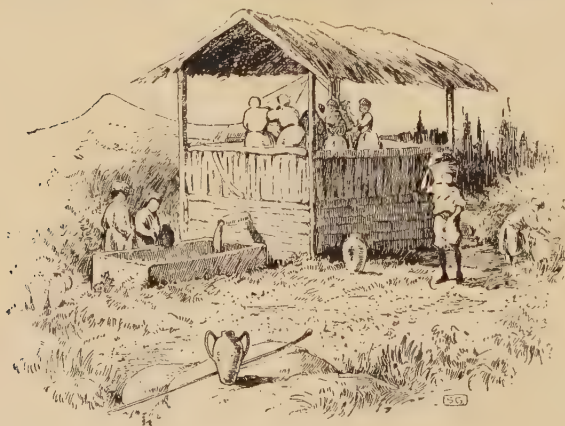
Take heed against false leaders (vs. 1-8).
Take heed to yourselves (vs. 9-27).
Take heed, for ye know not the time (vs. 28-37).
The earth made ready for Christ's coming.
Temperance applications.

1. And he began to speak unto them in parables. A man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country.

I. THE STORY OF THE UNFAITHFUL HUSBANDMEN, Mark 12 : 1-12.

"In this parable I find a sharp practical answer to the question many people are putting as to why life sometimes turns out so unpleasant for us that we ask whether it is worth living. In the parable, too, I find at least a hint that throws some sunshine upon that dark, mysterious fact of a great divine election — God giving to some men happiness and prosperity and wealth, and to others disaster, pain, poverty. I find in the parable also some suggestion of rest of heart and consolation in the face of the dark mystery of our world's sin — of the ruined lives that are all around us, and the query that will rise up in the feeling heart how a loving God can have it so. Perchance, too, just a gleam of light is thrown on the question, the answer of which lies away beyond the grave — What is the future of human souls in that world where the judgment is?" — *Prof. W. G. Elmslie.*

1. And he began to speak unto them in parables. "Parables" is in the plural, though Mark gives only one; two others are given in Matt. 21 : 28-32; 22 : 1-14, — "the Two Sons" and "the Marriage of the King's Son." The stories are different, but the main point of all three is the same. "Parable" means literally "beside-thrown." It is a comparison of one thing with another, usually of some material thing or secular happening with a spiritual truth. The use of illustrative stories is common in the East, and Christianity has made it enormously popular and influential in the West. Our Lord was the greatest of all tellers of stories with a purpose. He used this method because he wished to reach all classes and fix his truths in the memory. These little stories were not to be forgotten. Much of their point could be grasped by the poorest intellect, while their deeper meanings furnished food for thought to the most profound minds. A man planted a vineyard. "Our Lord seems to take up the words of the prophet Isaiah (5 : 1-7) and to build his teaching the more willingly on the old foundations, as he was accused of destroying the Law. Compare Deut. 32 : 32; Ps. 80 : 8-16; Ezek. 15 : 1-6; Hos. 10 : 1." — *Cambridge Bible.* The vineyard represents God's purpose for his people. It is what Christ called the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. The Father had sought to realize it in the Jewish people throughout their long history; now he had sent his Son to make the final attempt to realize it. The "man" of course is God himself, the Infinite Planter, the Maker and Owner of all. And set a hedge about it. "Hedge" is "literally, a dividing fence, not necessarily of thorns alone, compare



Winepress.

Isa. 17 : 11, but of loose stones, compare Ps. 80 : 12; and sometimes of both, compare Isa. 5 : 5." — *Bible for Home and School.* Palestine was full of wild animals that are fond of grapes, and of robbers who would not hesitate to pillage; the hedge was set to ward them off. This hedge represents in the parable the many restrictions of the Jewish religion, the requirement of circumcision, of many sacrifices, of ceremonial ablutions, of tithes, of the strict observance of the Sabbath and of feast days, and much besides which served as a "wall

of partition" between the Jews and heathenism, and kept the Jewish religion pure in the sink of foul iniquity caused in the ancient world by the abominations of idolatry. And digged a pit for the winepress. "The grapes were placed in a vat, in

2. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruits of the vineyard.

3. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4. And again he sent unto them another servant; and him they wounded in the head, and handled shamefully.

which they were trodden by the feet of the servants — a joyous operation accompanied with song (Judg. 9 : 27 ; Isa. 63 : 2 ; Jer. 25 : 30). This was the 'press,' in most cases a trough dug in the solid rock or in the earth, in which latter case it was lined with masonry (compare Num. 18 : 30 ; Prov. 3 : 10 ; Isa. 63 : 3 ; Lam. 1 : 15). At a lower elevation was the 'pit,' a smaller cavity, also often excavated out of the rock, into which the juice of the trodden grapes ran." — *New Century Bible*. **And built a tower.** Built of stone, the tower served as a point of vantage for warding off thieves or wild beasts, against which stones were hurled with slings. Tools were kept in the tower, as well as the wine itself. Here the workmen were sheltered from storms, and here they might even live. This feature of the parable indicates that God expected the Jews themselves to do their part in keeping the nation pure and strong, while he provided them with every advantage for driving away the foes of the true religion. **And let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country.** The husbandmen were tenants who rented the vineyard on condition that they should pay the owner each year a certain proportion of the products. These husbandmen represent the Jewish people and especially their leaders, to whom God entrusted the true religion and gave them the chance to establish and enlarge the kingdom of God on earth.

2. **And at the season.** The time for ripe grapes. There is a proper season for everything, and God does not ask us for results in the time of preparation but in the harvest time. Let our youth be such that "at the season," in our years of maturity, we may have a rich harvest to bring to the Owner of our lives. **He sent to the husbandmen a servant.** The "servant" or slave represents one of God's special messengers sent to the Jewish people to summon them to righteousness and to the service of their heavenly King, some great leader like Samuel or Elijah or Isaiah. **That he might receive from the husbandmen the fruits of the vineyard.** Christ's teaching contains many pleas for fruits.



Vineyard, with Ruins of Watchtower.

God is not satisfied with feelings or words or ceremonial observances, but he wants deeds of kindness, acts of courage, persevering efforts, souls won for eternity.

3. **And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.** The Jewish people were not content to ignore the prophets, to send them away empty, but their uneasy consciences aroused them to hate God's servants and persecute them bitterly. Thus Jezebel sought to kill Elijah and did kill many of his noble comrades. Thus Jehoram threatened Elisha. Thus Micaiah and Jeremiah were imprisoned, and Amos was warned by the authorities, and Zechariah was stoned, and Isaiah, so it is said, was sawn asunder. The imprisonment and beheading of John the Baptist was the latest and one of the most terrible of these iniquities.

4. **And again he sent unto them another servant; and him they wounded in the head, and handled shamefully.** In Matthew's version of the parable, Matt. 21 : 33-46, we are told of two groups of servants who were sent, the second company larger than the first.

5. **And he sent another; and him they killed.** Wickedness becomes worse as it is practised and bolder as it is allowed to go unpunished. **And many others; beating some, and killing some.** As, after Pharaoh had hardened his heart many times against the pleas of Moses, at last Jehovah hardened his heart and fixed him

5. And he sent another ; and him they killed : and many others ; beating some, and killing some.

6. He had yet one, a beloved son : he sent him last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard.

9. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

in his iniquity ; so the Jewish people, after exercising their violent passions against the prophets of righteousness for generations, became established in their cruelty and wickedness. The final permanency of evil is a terrible possibility, balanced by the blessed possibility of the final permanence of good.

6. **He had yet one, a beloved son.** Christ was constantly upheld by the knowledge that his Father loved him (John 3 : 35 ; 5 : 20) and was watching over him with tender solicitude, while at the same time, for the good of the world, he allowed him to suffer and would allow him to die. This same blessed consciousness may be cherished by all Christians. **He sent him last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.** He had hitherto sent only slaves ; now he sent one far dearer and more valuable than all his slaves. Those who see in Christ only another prophet, a little greater and wiser than the religious teachers that had preceded him, will do well to note this passage ; such was plainly not Christ's view of himself. Who can doubt that these words report for us the mind of God, the planning and consultation that took place in heaven before the incarnation of Jesus Christ ? This parable is a wonderful window into the counsels of the Eternal.

7. **But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.** Often in Paul's writings we meet this great name for Jesus Christ, "the Heir." God had given to him all things, and through him to his followers : we are joint-heirs with Christ. See Rom. 4 : 13 ; 8 : 17 ; Gal. 3 : 29 ; 4 : 1, 7 ; Tit. 3 : 7 ; Heb. 1 : 2 ; 6 : 17 ; 11 : 17 ; Jas. 2 : 5. It is not easy to see how the wicked husbandmen expected to get possession of the vineyard after the death of the heir ; but the application to the case of worldlings is clear, for they think that, if they can only stifle their conscience and silence the claims of Christ, they can enjoy the world and the present life without molestation. How little they realize the miseries inherent in wickedness !

8. **And they took him, and killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard.** They did not even grant the body a decent burial, but threw it out of the vineyard where the son had been killed, for the dogs and carrion birds to feast upon. Thus was Naboth stoned outside Jezreel, and Christ crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem. The Saviour had for weeks been prophesying to his disciples that the hatred of his enemies would result in his death ; now he does not hesitate to announce it publicly, though hidden in a parable.

9. **What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do?** Christ saw that the iniquity of the Jews was filled full ; he did not speak this parable in order to turn them from their evil ways, but to proclaim the penalty that awaited them. It is a parable not of pleading but of condemnation, and with this question and its answer we reach its climax. **He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.** In Matthew this answer is given by the listeners, much as David declared his own condemnation when carried away by Nathan's parable of the ewe lamb. In Luke the horrified hearers cry out, "God forbid !" In the time of the exile most of the husbandmen had been destroyed and the vineyard had been given for a time to the Assyrians. Later the land was seized by the Greeks and then by the Romans. The Jews knew well what poverty, peril, and dire wretchedness were involved in this giving of the vineyard "unto others."

10. **Have ye not read even this scripture.** They were supposed to be learned in the law, and Christ proceeded to quote from one of the most familiar psalms (Ps. 118 : 22, 23), a psalm which the Jews regarded as referring to the Messiah, and from which many among Christ's hearers had taken the Hosannas with which they had hailed the Saviour on his triumphal entrance. Did they not understand "even

10. Have ye not read even this scripture :
The stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the head of the corner ;
11. This was from the Lord,
And it is marvellous in our eyes ?
12. And they sought to lay hold on him ; and they feared the multitude ;
for they perceived that he spake the parable against them : and they left
him, and went away.

this " Bible passage ? How then could they be regarded as fit leaders of the nation ? **The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner.** Some have thought that the psalm took its rise from an actual occurrence in the building of Solomon's Temple, namely, that among the piles of cut stone laid out and numbered for the great edifice the builders failed to find the one designed for the corner-stone, the most important position of all, the entire building resting upon it, and that finally it was found in a disused corner of the temple area, covered with refuse, having been thrown away as worthless. The comparison serves for all who, though scorned by men, are exalted by Jehovah, and best of all for the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who, despised and rejected of men, was finally raised far above all principalities and powers, and placed beside his Father on the throne of the universe.

11. **This was from the Lord, And it is marvellous in our eyes ?** From the Lord, because only he could so reverse the judgment of the world. Marvellous in men's eyes, because running counter to all worldly expectation, the greater coming from the less, the lowly being preferred to the proud, the loftiest honor of history being assigned to a crucified convict.

12. **And they sought to lay hold on him.** In their blind wrath they would fulfil Christ's prophecy on the spot. They had murder in their hearts. **And they feared the multitude ; for they perceived that he spake the parable against them.** Christ's parable was clearly directed against the leaders of the Jews, but he was so popular with the common people that these leaders did not dare seize him. They must wait still further, and seek to incense against him the Roman authorities, who alone could condemn Christ to death. The affairs must be managed craftily — as it was. **And they left him, and went away.** They gave up their immediate attack, but continued their plotting. It was this same set of cruel and selfish schemers who finally brought about Christ's death.

THE SURE PENALTY OF WICKEDNESS. " The eye must go on seeing, or it will lose the power to see. The hand must go on working, or its muscles will shrink into helplessness." — *Rev. William R. Richards, D.D.* We must continue to serve God earnestly or we shall lose the power to serve God at all.

" Things are to move on eternally in fulfilment of the will of Christ. He is identified with all that is righteous, all that is wise, all that is ultimately successful. To oppose his course, to endeavor to defeat his object, to attempt to work out an eternal success apart from him, is as idle as to seek to stop the earth in its course, or to stand in the path of a stone avalanche in order to stem it." — *Prof. Marcus Dods.*

" The greatest sin a man can commit is to reject Christ. That is the sin of sins, the condemning sin ; and every man to whom the gospel is preached must either commit that sin, or accept the Lord as his Saviour. He cannot be neutral. He may try to hold the matter in suspense, like Pilate who said, ' What shall I then do with Jesus who is called Christ ? ' but he must either accept or reject at last. He can do no otherwise ; and if he rejects, he sins against the greatest grace and the brightest light. Then there follows this terrible inference : The darkest doom is that of those who are guilty of this greatest sin." — *William M. Taylor.*

" I remember away up in a lonely Highland valley, where beneath a tall black cliff, all weather-worn and cracked and seamed, there lies at the foot, resting on the greensward that creeps around its base, a huge rock that has fallen from the face of the cliff. A shepherd was passing beneath it ; and suddenly, when the finger of God's will touched it, and rent it from its ancient bed in the everlasting rock, it came down, leaping and bounding from pinnacle to pinnacle, — and it fell ; and the man that was beneath it is there now, ground to powder. Ah, my brethren ! that is not my illustration ; that is Christ's (Matt. 21 : 44). Therefore I say to you, since all that stand against him shall become as ' the chaff of the summer threshing-

floor,' and be swept utterly away, make him the foundation on which you build ; and when the rain sweeps away every refuge of lies, you will be safe and serene, builded upon the Rock of Ages." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

II. "TAKE YE HEED," Mark 13 : 1-37. TAKE HEED AGAINST FALSE LEADERS (vs. 1-8). Our Lord perceived that his enemies were rising up against him in overwhelming force and that his life on earth was drawing to a close. He was the more eager to plant the seeds of truth in the chosen band who were to continue his work, and spent most of his remaining hours with them, giving them his final instructions. For this purpose he withdrew with them to the quiet and the comparative safety of the Mount of Olives, where he uttered the great discourse summarized in this chapter.

First, he knew that after he, their divine Leader, should be withdrawn from their view, they would be likely to be turned aside from their task by false leaders, and he warned his disciples against them. The thought

was suggested by their passing through the temple on their way to the eastern steps leading down into the Kidron Valley, when one of the disciples spoke of the size, splendor, and massiveness of the vast structure. Some of the enormous marble blocks that composed it were 45 feet long. Most of them were $37\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, 12 feet high, and 18 feet broad. In reply our Lord uttered the prophecy that all those great blocks of stone would be overthrown, a proph-

ecy fulfilled in less than four decades by the destruction of Jerusalem when it was captured by

Titus, a destruction so complete that no one visiting the ruin would ever have guessed that the temple had been there.

In view of this prophecy, so full of dread, four of the disciples, the inner circle, Peter, James, and John, together with Andrew, came to Jesus on the Mount of Olives and asked him when Jerusalem

Cross Section of the Royal Porch of the Temple,
with its Three Rows of Pillars and Roof.
Below are arched vaults and cellars.

was to fall, and what sign would mark the fulfilment of the doom. Our Lord's reply was a warning against the false leaders which the coming times of tumult and terror would produce, men who would pretend to be Messiahs and would deceive many. He further described the disasters which would afflict the earth, not only in connection with the destruction of the temple, but, looking forward for centuries and millenniums, in connection with his own return to earth and the end of the world. These terrors are not to trouble Christ's followers, for their Saviour will be their protection. They need only to be true to him, and not fall aside to pretenders. We of to-day do not know when these things will happen, though every year must bring them nearer ; but we need evermore to watch and pray.

TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES (vs. 9-27). Continuing these admonitions in view of the future, Christ bade his disciples take heed to themselves, be prayerful, be trustful, be firm. They had a great work to do, nothing less than the winning of the world to Christ ; but that work involved a fierce contest against sin, the opposition of rulers, the opposition of their own dear ones, the hatred of "all men" — that is, of all the Christians. But they are God's elect, God's chosen ; they have God on their side. The Son of man would come with great power and glory. He would send forth his messengers, and he would gather his chosen to himself. What a triumph to await ! What a consciousness to support the Christian ! What an ally and what a power available for all who will lay hold upon them !

The mysterious signs heralding the last days of earth, the conclusion of this era, were intentionally vague, for Christ would have his followers be watching daily for his coming, and ever ready to receive him. They are, moreover, happenings which in certain measure have frequently taken place in the history of the world, though doubtless they will be intensified as the end of all things draws nigh. Our

Lord chose such common signs that his church might be continually spurred to fidelity, and reminded of his second coming.

TAKE HEED, FOR YE KNOW NOT THE TIME (vs. 28-37). Christ's final thought in this final discourse (for the Paschal teachings were more like familiar conversation with his friends) insisted upon the necessity of unceasing vigilance on the part of his disciples. His warnings had to do with events easily confused, the fall of Jerusalem, which would happen in the lifetime of many of his hearers, and Christ's second coming and the end of the world, which would be witnessed by the generation or race of Christ's faithful followers. But they were not to inquire curiously as to the exact time when these momentous events would come to pass, for no man knew, nor the angels in heaven, and Christ was frank to say that he himself while in the flesh did not know it: no one knew the exact time but the Omniscent Father. Christians are to be like the servants of a man on a long journey who may come back to his home at any moment. Let not the Master, when he comes, find his servants sleeping! Christ's word to all Christians of to-day is the same as to his disciples of old:

WATCH!

THE EARTH MADE READY FOR CHRIST'S COMING. "Had Frenchmen appreciated that if they scoffed at God and said 'Ha! Ha!' to his commandments, the Reign of Terror would follow soon; had our fathers been taught to discern the sign of the Son of man in their sky, warning them that stealing black men from Africa would bear the bitter fruits it has produced, because the judgment of *this* (not *that*) world must come, and the prince of *this* world be cast out and the sign of the Son of man be *revealed*; had the fact that every word spoken by him on Olivet was fulfilled — as with solemn asseveration he declared it would be — upon the generation then on earth convinced our fathers that Christ is Lord of this present world, and prevented us — their children — from fancying we should have to give no account until we reach another, perhaps both we and those who have preceded us might have listened with augmented interest to the exhortation: 'Watch and pray.'" — *William Burnet Wright*.

"Christ *must* reign because the throne he occupies is peculiar to him. There is no one to take his place; there is no one to mount the steps of that throne." — *Rev. F. W. Norwood, D.D.*

Christians are to keep the promise of Christ's return ever in mind, not in such a way as to interfere with their tasks or lessen their fidelity to Christ's other commands, but in such fashion as to be buoyed with a great hope, quickened to unsparing diligence, and spurred to unceasing watchfulness. Our one work is to do what we can to prepare the world for Christ's coming by cleansing it from evil and planting the good, in our own hearts and homes, our own towns and nations, and in the wide world. It is work that men cannot do alone, not even in the narrow confines of their own lives; but they can win the infinite aid of the Holy Spirit. No greater, more blessed, and more urgent task than this could be committed to men. Let us redouble our efforts, for Christ may come again very soon.

TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS. Nothing in all the world's history is a better preparation for Christ's second coming than the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution with the Volstead Act for its enforcement. It means that the enormous influence of the United States will be exerted for a strong, pure life; for loving and comfortable homes; for political cleanness and business sanity, and for the advancement of all good causes with the billions of dollars annually saved. It means, in time, the extension of prohibition and its blessings over all the world, since the other nations will soon see the impossibility of competing commercially with the United States if they are handicapped by the drink traffic with its vast direct costs and its still greater indirect costs in the impairment of labor and of national character. The United States has still much to do before we can be considered ideal husbandmen in this particular; but we have made a glorious beginning, and the forces of the Most High are going on to a complete triumph.

LESSON X (23). — June 3.

JESUS FACING BETRAYAL AND DEATH. — Mark 14: 1-42.

PRINT vs. 17-25, 32-36.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Not what I will, but what thou wilt.* — MARK 14: 36.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 22 : 1-5, 18, 19.

Primary Topic : JESUS' LAST SUPPER WITH HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material : Mark 14 : 17-25, 32-36.

Memory Verse : This do in remembrance of me. Luke 22 : 19.

Junior Topic : JESUS' LAST SUPPER WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

Lesson Material : Mark 14 : 17-25, 32-36.

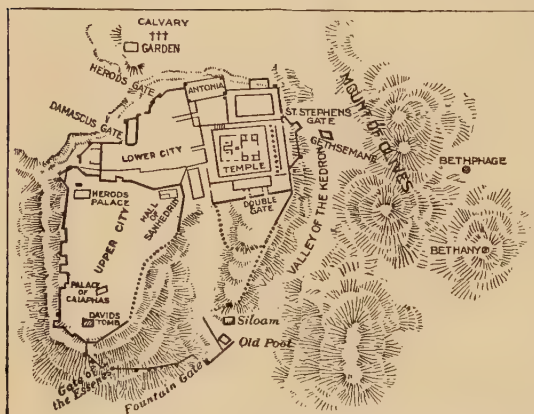
Memory Verse : Luke 22 : 19.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : LOYALTY IN TIMES OF TESTING.

Topic for Young People and Adults : "THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS."

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes should be taught carefully the origin of the Lord's Supper and the meaning of its two elements, so that



whenever they see it celebrated they will know its significance and hear the call to Christian discipleship. It is a mistake to think that Gethsemane would have no teaching for boys and girls. Their sorrows are as deep as those of adults, and they need especially to learn to submit their wills to the divine will.

The Older Classes will find this lesson full of great themes : the yielding of our best to Christ, heart communion with Christ, the putting away of selfish ambitions, the doctrine of the atonement, the nature of Christ, the bearing of sorrow, the submission of our wills to God. These and other subjects may be divided among the members of the class well in advance, each to take the lead in the discussion of his topic.

Suggested Question for Discussion :
Who are the Judases of to-day, and how can their evil be overcome ?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Denney's *The Way Everlasting*. Farrar's *Chats with Children of the Church*. Peck's *Old Sins in New Clothes*. Ainsworth's *A Thornless World*. Young's

The Travels of the Heart. Wright's *The Heart of the Master*. Shannon's *The Breath in the Winds*. Burrell's *In the Upper Room*. David Smith's *Man's Need of God*. Work's *Every Day*. Jones's *The Inner Circle*. Vance's *In the Breaking of the Bread*. Bushnell's *Christ and His Salvation*. Allon's *The Vision of God*. Richards's *God's Choice of Men*. Edersheim's *The Temple and Its Services*. Erdman's *Coming to the Communion*. Miller's *Our Reasonable Faith*. Kerr's *My First Communion*. Swanson's *Gethsemane*. Power's *The "I Wills" of Christ*. Trench's *Brief Thoughts and Meditations*. Hartzell's *Sin and Our Saviour*. Phillips Brooks's *Sermons for the Church Year*. Vaughan's *Plain Words on Christian Living*. Beecher's *Sermons*, Vol. 3. Moody's *Great Joy*. Horton's *The Commandments of Jesus*. Simcox's *The Cessation of Prophecy*.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Jesus in retirement at Bethany on Wednesday, April 5, A.D. 30. On the evening of the following day, in the upper room and the Garden.

Place. — Jerusalem and the western slope of the Mount of Olives.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

How the passover was observed.
The geography of the Mount of Olives.
The character of Judas.
The passover and the Lord's Supper.
Bread and wine as Bible symbols.
New Testament references to the Lord's Supper.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Lord's Supper and Gethsemane.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR THE LAST SUPPER, vs. 1-16.

The costly ointment poured forth. .
The betrayal.
The man with the pitcher.
Our preparation for the Lord's Supper.

II. CHRIST'S LAST SUPPER WITH HIS DISCIPLES, vs. 17-26.

The traitor disclosed.
The bread of communion.
The wine of communion.
The meaning of the Lord's Supper.

III. THE GARDEN OF SORROWS, vs. 27-42.

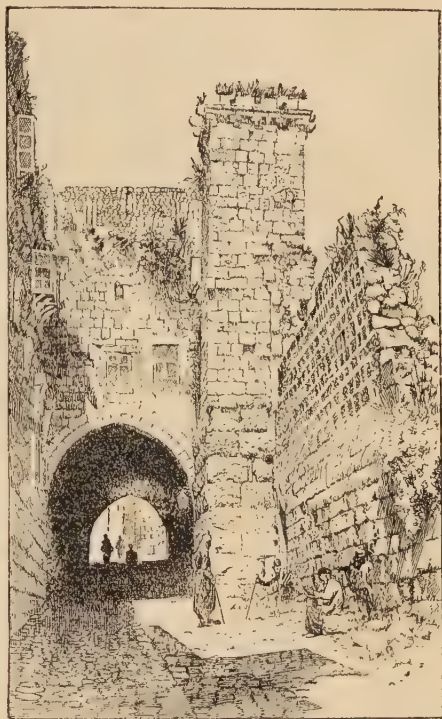
The protesting disciples.
The sleeping disciples.
Christ's agony and prayers.
Our Gethsemanes and how to endure them.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR THE LAST SUPPER, vs. 1-16. IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER. We see the clouds gathering ever more threatening over the Son of God. Christ's triumphal entry convinced the members of the Sanhedrin that their influence with the people was gone unless they put him out of the way. At a meeting held soon after our Lord's arrival they determined on his death, but decided that he must be arrested quietly for fear of arousing a riot among the common people and thus causing the intervention of the law-loving Romans. It was only two days before the passover, the feast which commemorated the escape of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, a feast which naturally aroused in the Jews wild hopes of deliverance from the hated Roman bondage. Anticipating tumults at that time, with so many hundreds of thousands of Jews in Jerusalem from all parts of the world, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judæa, had come to Jerusalem from his capital, Cæsarea, and kept a double garrison in the tower of Antonia next to the temple area. For these reasons, though Jesus taught openly day by day in the temple, the Jewish leaders did not dare to seize him there.

Jesus and his disciples went out every night to Bethany on the Mount of Olives, where our Lord would be measurably safe from arrest, and where Jesus was entertained by the grateful family of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. On one of those evenings supper was given him by Simon the Leper, a man who had been a leper and who had doubtless been healed of the terrible disease by the Great Physician — one of the numberless unrecorded miracles of the Saviour. He was probably very close to the family of Lazarus, perhaps his brother, though from the prominence of Martha in the meal (John 12 : 2) it is conjectured that Simon was her husband ; others think that he was the husband of Mary, who was thus under a double debt of gratitude to Jesus.

At this feast Mary the sister of Lazarus (John 12 : 3), — who is not named in the accounts of Mark and of Matthew (26 : 6-13) because it would not have been safe for her to be named before the time when John wrote, — performed a deed which, as Christ prophesied, has echoed down the ages to her endless praise. She chose from her possessions probably the most precious of all, an alabaster of ointment. The beautiful translucent quartz known as alabaster is named from the town of Alabastron in Egypt, where it was cut from the nearby mountains and made into little bottles for ointment, called alabasters. But the name came to be applied to any small container, much as we say "a glass."

Unguents were and are highly valued in the hot Eastern countries, where they are most grateful to parched skin, and of all anointing oils the most precious was that selected by Mary, spikenard, made from a plant brought from far-off India. It was so valuable that only the rich could afford it, and Mary had (John 12 : 3) a pound of it, which was worth more than 300 denarii, or about \$50 in our money. But as the denarius was the day's wage of an ordinary laborer, the value of the ointment translated into American purchasing power of the present time, would be from \$600 to \$900. Breaking off the narrow neck of the flask, Mary came to Jesus as he lay



Tower of Antonia, Jerusalem.

The Tower of Antonia stood on the northwest corner of the temple area, on a rock 50 cubits (75 feet) high. It had four corner towers, and a large inner space with courts and camps for soldiers. It was connected with the temple cloisters by two flights of stairs.

stretched out on the low couch at the table, and poured out all the perfume, first on his head and then on his feet, tenderly wiping them with her long, flowing hair.

Judas Iscariot, the treasurer of the twelve, who was in the habit of stealing from their scanty funds, strenuously objected to the "waste" of the ointment, hypocritically reminding the



Anointing the Feet of Jesus.

Bida.

disciples that the spikenard, if sold, would have furnished much money to give to the poor (John 12 : 4-6), and some of the disciples, poor men who had all their lives been obliged to practise the closest economy, joined Judas in his protest. Jesus, however, saw Mary's deed as one of the world's most glorious acts of consecration, and prophesied that wherever the gospel should be preached throughout the whole world,

Mary's loving gift should be a memorial of her. How magnificently has that prophecy been fulfilled!

Illustration. "I read in *The Christian Herald* of a girl who obtained a reward for sentiment. This young girl had nursed an aged relation, who was neglected by her other relatives. When the woman died, she left some money and an old watch. This watch was to be given to whichever one of the heirs might choose to take it instead of \$500. One after another examined it, and said, 'Give me the \$500; the old watch rattles, but will not tick.' But the girl who had nursed the old lady said she would take the watch because it had her friend's picture in it. She was ridiculed for her sentiment, but one day, when looking at the picture, she accidentally touched a secret spring in the watch. It flew open, and she found the wheels had all been taken out, and the watch was full of beautiful diamonds. Her sacrifice and love were not wasted." — *Rev. James M. Farrar, D.D.*

THE BETRAYAL. Some think that Judas was the most ambitious of the twelve, and that Christ's reference to his coming death and burial (verse 8) was the death blow to his hopes that Jesus was to be a great earthly conqueror, the deliverer of his nation from the Romans. At the same time he saw perhaps more clearly than ever before that Christ's followers must yield themselves to a life of poverty, or at any rate must put from them all greed for worldly goods. Therefore he went away at once to the chief priests and offered to betray Christ to them if they would give him money; which they promptly and gladly agreed to do. Some think that Judas took this step in order to force Jesus to face his foes and destroy them with his miraculous power; but the Gospels do not credit him with such a motive, and the conjecture is wholly fanciful. Probably the traitor expected a large sum, but all that he actually received was thirty "pieces of silver" (Matt. 26 : 15), equivalent to 120 denarii, or about \$18. This was the price of a slave (Ex. 21 : 32), and would pay four months' wages of an ordinary laborer. Mark's reference to the promise of money, however, implies that this was only an advance payment, and that more was to follow on the completion of his shameful deed. But Judas never collected the remainder.

THE MAN WITH THE PITCHER. After spending Wednesday in prayerful retirement in Bethany, preparing himself for the awful trial that was to come, on the morning of Thursday, the passover day, Christ gave his disciples instructions for the sacred feast of that evening. Bethany was regarded, for passover purposes, as part of Jerusalem, but our Lord would eat the feast in the Holy City itself, for there he was to suffer as the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Making use of his supernatural

17. And when it was evening he cometh with the twelve.

18. And as they sat and were eating, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you shall betray me, *even* he that eateth with me.

knowledge, Jesus sent Peter and John (Luke 22 : 8) to the city, bidding them look for a man bearing a pitcher of water — a task usually performed by women, and so he would be easily known; further, water was usually drawn in the evening, and this was the morning. This man was to be followed, and whatever house he entered they were to say to the owner that the Master wished to use his guest-chamber for the paschal feast with his disciples. It all fell out as the Saviour foretold, and a large upper room was furnished them, the same "upper room," doubtless, which played so large a part in the early days of the Christian church. It is thought to have been the home of Mary the mother of Mark, and very likely the "man with the pitcher" was John Mark himself, the writer of this Gospel. His modesty would prevent his naming himself here.

OUR PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER. Mary did not literally partake of Christ's last supper with his disciples, but she partook of it spiritually when she made her lavish gift, and proved that she was in the closest communion with him. We prepare ourselves for the Lord's Supper by giving to the Lord all we have and are, and that is the only adequate preparation.

"As far as we know, Mary gave Jesus the only intelligent sympathy and encouragement he ever received from man or woman. He needed no such help to strengthen his resolution, but others do, and his praise of her marks those who give it as doers of the best work that is done in the world." — *William Burnet Wright*. Giving this help to others is one of the best of preparations for the Lord's Supper.

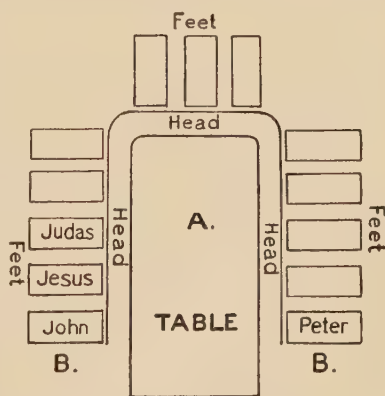
"A beautiful deed, like Mary's, is always acceptable to God, is always recognized by him." — *Rev. Frederick F. Shannon, D.D.*

"It is enough for a true Christian when the word comes, 'The Master hath need.' Happy is he whose home has ever a room which Christ may call 'my guest-chamber.' Nay, rather, happy is he in whose heart and home alike there is no smallest room which is not wholly Christ's." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

II. CHRIST'S LAST SUPPER WITH HIS DISCIPLES, vs. 17-26. 17. **And when it was evening he cometh with the twelve.** As Jesus and his disciples descended from the Mount of Olives, "before them lay Jerusalem in her festive attire. White tents dotted the sward, gay with the bright flowers of early spring, or peered out from the gardens and the darker foliage of the olive-plantations. From the gorgeous temple buildings, dazzling in their snow-white marble and gold, on which the dazzling rays of the sun were reflected, rose the smoke of the altar of burnt-offering. It was the last day-view which the Lord had of the Holy City — till his resurrection!" — *Alfred Edersheim*. Note that Judas, traitor and hypocrite, was back again in the ranks of the Twelve.

18. **And as they sat and were eating.** Mark omits the disgraceful dispute over the chief seats at the table, rebuked by the Saviour's washing of the disciples' feet — one of the noblest and most meaningful acts of his life. Peter was probably ashamed to have the scene recorded. **Jesus said, Verily I say unto you.** The importance and surprisingness of the coming disclosure are emphasized by "Verily." **One of you shall betray me, even he that eateth with me.** In saying, "Ye are clean, but not all" (John 13 : 10), our Lord showed that he realized the presence of the traitor; but he seemed to be overpowered by the consciousness that one of his chosen and most intimate friends could be so base (John 13 : 21), and felt obliged to express his sorrow and dismay.

19. **They began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I?** No disciple thought it possible that it could be any other member of their little band,



Plan of Supper Table.

19. They began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I?

20. And he said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, he that dippeth with me in the dish.

21. For the Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him : but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed ! good were it for that man if he had not been born.

22. And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye : this is my body.

23. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them : and they all drank of it.

and no one would ask, "Is it *he*?" Each examined his heart for any seed of disloyalty, any unsuspected cowardice. That is the way every Christian should meet Christ's warnings.

20. **And he said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve.** John, the beloved disciple, sitting nearest to Jesus, was asked by Peter to ask Jesus which disciple was the traitor, and it was in answer to this private and whispered question that our Lord gave the signal here hinted at but told more plainly in John's Gospel (John 13 : 23-30). **He that dippeth with me in the dish.** The unleavened bread they were eating was in the form of thin cakes, which were dipped into a sauce made of vinegar, figs, dates, almonds, and spice. John and Peter learned with horror the real character of Judas, and perhaps they heard the murmured words with which Jesus let Judas know that his black heart was an open book to the Saviour, and knew why Judas left the room before the Lord's Supper was instituted. "*And it was night*" — thus tragically does John's account close the incident.

21. **For the Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him.** This verse was doubtless spoken aloud, and was Christ's final plea to Judas. That Christ's death had been prophesied was, as Judas well knew, no excuse for his treachery. No fate compelled him to do what he did. **But woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed !** These solemn words may well sound in the ears of every one whose disobedient life is renewed treason to God's infinite love in Jesus Christ. **Good were it for that man if he had not been born.** We hold on to life as if it were the supreme good ; but it is no blessing but rather a curse to the man who merely uses it to serve the devil with, as Judas did.

22. **And as they were eating, he took bread.** One of the small passover cakes, a pile of which was placed before him as the head of the family and presiding officer of the feast. The ordinance which he now established used the very simplest, least expensive, and most universal elements, that it might be observed readily everywhere. **And when he had blessed.** Christ's habit of giving thanks at meals is evident throughout the Gospels. **He brake it, and gave to them.** "The bread represents his body, and reminds us that the Son of God took upon himself a true human body that he might as our substitute suffer for our sins. The breaking of the bread represents his being wounded for our transgressions by the nails and the spear." — *Rev. Park Hays Miller*. **And said, Take ye : this is my body.** The Saviour, after the feeding of the five thousand, had in a memorable discourse declared himself to be the Bread of life. Bread, "the staff of life," is the most digestible and nutritious of common foods, and, with butter spread upon it, contains all the elements needed by the body. Thus Christ is our strength, and supplies us with all that we need for usefulness on earth and endless bliss in heaven. As Christ was visibly and substantially before his hearers in the flesh, he could not have meant these words in a material sense, as the Romanists teach, but in a symbolic sense.

23. **And he took a cup.** Four cups of wine were taken during the paschal feast. Some think this was the third cup, known as "the cup of blessing," but probably it was the fourth cup, following the closing act of the feast, since the rite was established "after supper" (Luke 22 : 20 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 25). **And when he had given thanks, he gave to them.** Thanks to his Father in heaven for the support he would receive in his coming trial, thanks for the blessings of friendship, thanks for physical joys and powers, thanks above all for communion with his Father in heaven. **And they all drank of it.** They were so bidden by Jesus (Matt. 26 : 27).

24. **And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.** The blood was the *new* covenant (Luke 22 : 20) or testament, whence the

24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.

25. Verily I say unto you, I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

title, "The New Testament." It was poured out "unto remission of sins" (Matt. 26: 28). The sacrifice of the Lamb of God on Calvary took the place of the ancient sacrifice of the passover lamb, God's blood covenant with his people. Even as the blood sprinkled on the doorpost and the lintel caused the death angel to pass over the homes of the Israelites, so the blood of Jesus Christ, accepted by us in faith, causes God to pass over our sins, and remember them no more against us forever. Here we reach the very heart of the gospel. "Take the blessed doctrine of the blood out of my Bible, and my capital is gone, and I've got to take to something else than preaching." — *D. L. Moody*.

25. Verily I say unto you. Another announcement of vital importance is heralded by "verily." I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God. Thus the Saviour gently tells his disciples that his death is near, and at the same time, to soften the blow, reminds them of the coming sure triumph of his kingdom, the happy "marriage supper of the Lamb" of which he had spoken to them.

The commemoration of the passover always closed with the singing of psalms, the last portion of the Great Hallel or Hallelujah, Psalms 115-118. The first portion, Psalms 113, 114, was sung just before the drinking of the second cup.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. "Suppose it had been left to the apostles to devise a memorial of their Master: what would they have chosen to remember him by? Probably they would have instituted a rite commemorative of his teaching or his miracles. But when Christ instituted his memorial, he fixed upon his death, and said: 'Remember me; and when you remember me, let it be for this — that I died for you.' — *Prof. David Smith*.

"The meaning of this service is suggested by the beautiful names it bears. It is called 'The Sacrament' because of its more frequent observance. It is called 'The Lord's Supper' because it was established by him at the last supper he ate with his disciples before his death. It is also called 'The Communion' because we 'commune' with Christ in silent prayer, we tell him our needs and fears and hopes, and he gives us messages of peace and cheer. Others also are communing with him, and we are reminded that all believers form one body, sharing the same faith and hope and love. This service is also called 'The Eucharist,' from a word which means 'to give thanks'; for Christ gave thanks before he distributed the bread and wine, and this service should be for us not one of gloom but of gladness, not of fear and awe but of holy joy and thanksgiving." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman*.

"The great act of confession on the part of Christians is the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Communion is the great public avowal on the part of the church of its faith in Jesus. The 'sacramentum' was the oath of loyalty to the emperor which was administered to Roman soldiers, and for us the 'sacrament' means that we have pledged allegiance to Christ, our King." — *Rev. Hugh T. Kerr, D.D.*

III. THE GARDEN OF SORROWS, vs. 27-42. THE PROTESTING DISCIPLES. On the way from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord took occasion to warn all his disciples against falling away from him. Not Judas alone, but every one of them would "be offended" or "caused to stumble" in their Christian allegiance. They all scorned the very thought of this, and Peter as usual was foremost, declaring that though all the others should prove false to Jesus, he would not. Therefore Jesus addressed to him the solemn and definite prophecy that before the cock should crow twice that night, he would thrice deny his Lord.

CHRIST'S AGONY AND PRAYERS. 32. And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane. Passing through one of the gates in the great wall of Jerusalem, which was open on passover night, Christ and the disciples went down the steep side of the valley of the Kidron east of the city, crossed a bridge, and thence up the western slope of Olivet to a place where Jesus often went, an olive orchard ("Garden") called Gethsemane, which means "the oil-press" — doubtless so named because a press was there to extract the oil from the olives. The traditional site is preserved with pious care to this day, and, with its flowers and its very ancient olive-trees, is one of the most precious localities in all Palestine.

32. And they come unto a place which was named Ġēth-sēm'-ā-nē: and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray.

33. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled.

34. And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: abide ye here, and watch.

35. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him.

"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.

But the olives they were not blind to him,
The little gray leaves were kind to him:
The thorn-tree had a mind to him
When into the woods he came." — *Sidney Lanier.*

And he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray. Eight of the eleven men were bidden to remain at the entrance of the olive grove, while our Lord with his three

chosen disciples pressed into the shadows (the full moon of passover was shining), seeking the communion with his Father which alone would give him strength for the fierce trials that were imminent.

33. **And he taketh with him Peter and James and John.** These three had been selected by Jesus to witness the raising from the dead of the daughter of Jairus and the transfiguration on Mt. Hermon,

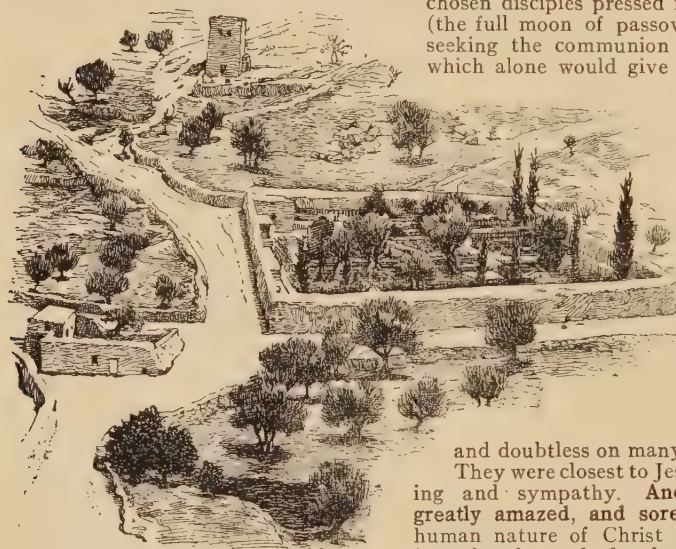
and doubtless on many other occasions. They were closest to Jesus in understanding and sympathy. **And began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled.** The human nature of Christ shrank from the fate that loomed ghastly before him, the most horrible death man has devised; but far more his divine nature shrank from the

assumption of the foulness and weight of human guilt. No one was ever so distressed, for no one had ever this cause for distress.

34. **And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.** "Death was to the Lord of life a far stranger, a far more terrible thing than to any other among the children of Adam. He saw it more distinctly as the wages of sin, as the expression of God's holy hatred against sin, than any other had ever done." — *Trench.* **Abide ye here, and watch.** Though Christ would not submit his agony to the gaze of even these dearest friends, he wished to know that they were near him, feeling for him, and ready to notify him if his foes should approach. Silent sympathy is the best of gifts in times of the heaviest grief.

35. **And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground.** Luke 22 : 41 tells us that he separated himself from the three by about a stone's throw. **And prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him.** "The hour" of suffering and shame which he saw before him; Christ would escape it, if it were possible without failing of his mission of human salvation. This is no prayer to be spared it otherwise.

36. **And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee.** Abba (which appears in English in "abbot") is the word for "Father" in the Aramaic language



Garden of Gethsemane, and Road to the Mount of Olives.

36. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt.

used ordinarily by our Lord. All things are possible to God in a material sense, since he is the Creator of all things and the source of all power; but not in a spiritual sense, since God cannot do anything which would be contrary to his own nature. Even to save his only-begotten Son, God could not act in opposition to his infinite love for men or be false to his age-long plan of salvation for mankind. **Remove this cup from me.** "Cup" has the same significance as "hour" just used. It means "fate," and comes to this meaning from the custom of a host in sending a cup of wine to his guest at a table. "This was another cup from that of fear of death. This cup, from which he turned away his head, was such as only he could drink who knew no sin and yet was made sin for us." — *Rev. William S. Swanson.* **Howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt.** In these glorious words the divine Christ triumphs over the human Jesus, and our Lord rises to the full measure of the purpose which brought him from heaven to earth. This is the prayer which must sanctify all our most impassioned entreaties. It is the blessing of calm reason in our desires; for God's will is always best, for us and for our dear ones. Here is the climax of Gethsemane.

THE SLEEPING DISCIPLES. "Again and again he prayed. In the loneliness of his soul, in the heaviness of his heart, in the desolation and gloom which his sufferings cast over him, he came to his three most favored disciples, not once but twice, for the sympathy and help which he then so much needed and craved. Alas! in the heaviness of their hearts, in the weariness of that hour, in the grief of their souls, they had fallen into deep slumber, unappreciative of his terrible suffering. What a grief this must have been to his heart! As with many of us, he found them not watching, but sleeping. 'He must tread the wine-press alone.' " — *Rev. J. S. Hartzell.*

But "certainly their failure to be true to him had nothing wanton or deliberate about it. They were asleep. They did not plot against him. Here is just the difference between Peter and Judas. Indeed, all through that night the disciples are like men stunned." — *Phillips Brooks.*

Our lesson closes with a tragic scene (vs. 43-46), the culmination of Judas's treachery. The fallen disciple came with an armed mob, stirred up by the Jewish authorities. He led them into the sacred grove and straight up to his divine Leader, whom he pointed out by a sign agreed upon, nothing less than a hypocritical kiss, the usual salute given to a rabbi. Having thus completed the most shameful deed in history, Judas led his mob, with its august captive, off to the high priest's palace.

OUR GETHSEMANES AND HOW TO ENDURE THEM. Because Christ endured his awful Gethsemane, we can endure our lesser ones, for we have his strength with which to meet them. He was sadly alone under the olive-trees, but we are never alone. Our divine Comrade is by our side, and he will not go to sleep. The secret of triumph in any trial is loving and trustful communion with Jesus Christ, and a life lived in glad obedience to his will.

" 'Thy will be done' is sometimes a prayer of resignation, sometimes a prayer of consecration. In Gethsemane it was both." — *Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones, D.D.*

"We complain of the strength of our evil wills — alas! have not we ourselves fed them? We complain of the weakness of our good wills; alas! have not we ourselves starved them?" — *Philip Bennett Power.*

"Not as I will": the sound grows sweet
Each time my lips the words repeat.
'Not as I will': the darkness feels
More safe than light when this thought steals
Like whispered voice to calm and bless
All unrest and all loneliness.

'Not as I will,' because the One
Who loved us first and best has gone
Before us on the road, and still
For us must all his love fulfil,
'Not as we will.'"

— *Helen Hunt Jackson.*

LESSON XI (24). — June 10.

THE ARREST AND TRIAL. — Mark 14:43—15:15.

PRINT Mark 15:1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He was despised, and rejected of men.* — ISA. 53:3.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 53 : 1-6.

Primary Topic : HOW WICKED MEN TREATED JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 15 : 1-15.

Memory Verse : He was despised, and rejected of men. Isa. 53 : 3.

Junior Topic : THE TRIAL OF JESUS.

Lesson Material : Mark 15 : 1-15.

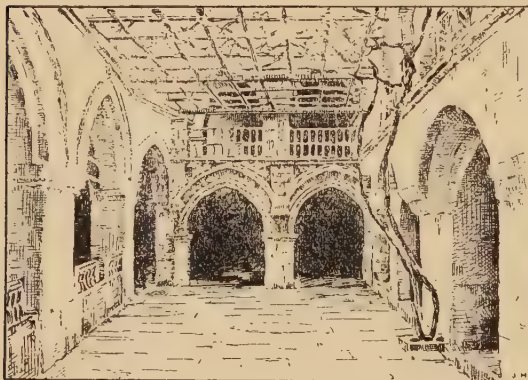
Memory Verse : He was despised, and rejected of men. Isa. 53 : 3.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE TRIAL OF JESUS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : JESUS FACING HIS ENEMIES.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes, interested as they are in the character of Peter, should



Open Court in the Palace of Caiaphas the High Priest.

be told about his denial of Christ, and warned never to fall through cowardice as he fell. The character of Pilate teaches the same lesson, and the main point to be brought out with the boys and girls in this lesson is that they should "stand up for Jesus," and how they are to do it.

The Older Classes will seek to gain a clear account of the trials of Jesus. To do this ask four members of the class to become very familiar each with the story in a different Gospel, so that you can build up on the blackboard a tabular list of the happenings in their chronological order. Let the lesson center on Christ, bringing out, in contrast to all the evil that surrounded him, the majesty, serenity, wisdom, and power of his character.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How is Christianity on trial to-day in our community ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The arrest, midnight of Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30. The trials before the Jewish ecclesiastics, early in the morning of Friday, April 7, followed by the trials before Pilate and Herod. Final decision of Pilate, about 9 A.M.

Place. — Jerusalem, the palace of Annas and Caiaphas. The judgment hall of Pilate.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Phelps's *The Story of Jesus Christ*. Wilson's *The Christ We Forget*. Taylor's *Peter the Apostle*. Davis's *The Story of the Nazarene*. Good's *The Jesus of Our Fathers*. Hill's *Life of Christ*. Davis's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

THE ROUND TABLE. FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Sanhedrin.

Peter's character as disclosed by these events. What this lesson shows us about Christ. The character of Pilate. Christ's bearing during his trials. Illegal features of Christ's trials.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Facing His Enemies.

I. PETER DENIES HIS LORD, Mark 14 : 43-72.

Peter's sword.
Peter by the fire.
The sad denial.
The bitter repentance.

II. CHRIST BEFORE PILATE, Mark 15 : 1-5.

The final trial before the Jewish authorities.
Pilate's examination.
The silence of Jesus.

III. PILATE'S SURRENDER TO THE MOB, Mark 15 : 6-15.

Christ or Barabbas?
"Crucify him!"
Our Lord on trial to-day.

I. PETER DENIES HIS LORD, Mark 14 : 43-72. PETER'S SWORD. "Confusion seized the olive garden. Tramping steps grew heavier on the pathway. Lights began to burn through the trees. Armor flashed, and military commands became audible. A delegation of Jewish priests and elders, formally accompanied by a detachment summoned from the fortress of Antonia, or by a portion of the

large guard posted at the temple during passover week, advanced upon Gethsemane." — *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.*

As our Lord went out to meet them, so majestic was his mien that the soldiers fell backward to the earth in absolute terror. The spell was broken by that climax of insolent treachery, the kiss of Judas. By his tender rebuke Jesus sought to save his fallen disciple even at the last, but his yearning love was in vain.

"Jesus asked that they should let his disciples go, and it was an easy boon to grant, for he alone mattered. His friends had with them but two swords, one of which was used by Peter when he struck off the ear of Malchus. By the laws of war, Malchus deserved it. But our Lord's last act before they bound him was to institute the Red Cross for foe as well as friend, and he told Peter to put his sword back into its sheath." — *P. Whitwell Wilson.* This healing of the ear of the high priest's servant was the last of Christ's long series of healing miracles. It was rendered necessary by Peter's blind and foolish attempt to make good his previous boasts of courage. Caused by human perversity and worked for the benefit of an enemy, the miracle was a fit precursor of the cross.

PETER BY THE FIRE. All the disciples forsook Christ and fled — all, even James, who was to be the first martyr of the disciples; even John, the other "son of thunder"; even Peter, who had bragged that though all men should forsake Jesus, he would not. One young man, who had sprung from his bed when the soldiers marched by and had followed in great anxiety for Jesus, clad only in his night gown, left it in the soldiers' hands and fled naked. It is supposed that he was Mark himself, the writer of this Gospel.

It was midnight or later. In the confusion of events some points are not clear, but the prisoner was first taken before the crafty ex-high priest, Annas (John 18:19-24), who gave a preliminary hearing, but could extort from Jesus nothing that would incriminate him. Our Lord refused to state what he had been teaching: "Ask those who have heard me," he justly said. But that was the last thing Christ's enemies desired.

After the flight from the garden, John and Peter followed the soldiers at a distance. John had a house in Jerusalem and was acquainted with the high priest, so that he readily won admittance, and seems even to have heard the preliminary trial, which he alone records. He obtained the admission of Peter to the courtyard of the palace, and left the blustering disciple by the fire there — a place of temptation, for soldiers and servants were there with him, all ready with their tongues.

THE SAD DENIAL. Peter's first temptation came when the maid who tended the door looked steadily at him and, recognizing him as one whom she had seen with Christ, charged him with the fact. "Woman," said Peter quickly and anxiously, "I did not know him." But, feeling himself to be in danger, he left the fire and went out into the shadow of the porch. Cold and curiosity joined to bring Peter back to the fire, where another servant girl noticed him and told the crowd around the fire that he was one of Christ's friends. Peter swore this time in his terror, and declared, "I do not know the man." A little later one of the servants of the high priest, a relative of Malchus, asserted positively that Peter was one of Christ's followers, and added that he knew it by Peter's Galilean mode of speech. With renewed curses Peter repeated his declaration that he did not know Jesus. Never in all history was a braggart so sadly self-exposed.

THE BITTER REPENTANCE. After the first trial, that before Annas, our Lord was taken to the audience room of the ruling high priest, Caiaphas by name, the son-in-law of Annas. Hither came false witnesses, hired by the Saviour's enemies, but their



From an Oberammergau photograph.
Caiaphas (Sebastian Lang).

stories were plainly manufactured and did not agree. Finally Caiaphas asked Jesus plainly whether he was the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus could no longer remain silent and solemnly, in the face of death, declared that he was the long-expected Messiah, God's own Son, who would sit at the right hand of the Father on his throne, and would some day return to earth on the clouds of heaven. Pretending horror, Caiaphas rent his garments, and the members of the Sanhedrin who were present unanimously gave a verdict of guilty of blasphemy. The penalty was death.

Our Lord, on his way from Annas to Caiaphas, crossed the courtyard, for the two seem to have occupied opposite sides of the same palace, and passed near Peter. Jesus heard Peter's third denial, and the cock crew the second time. With a look of infinite sorrow and love commingled Jesus turned toward the renegade disciple, Peter the Rock, on whose bold confession Christ had said that his church should be founded. Then Peter, in a flash, remembered that Christ had foretold that before the cock should crow twice that night he would thrice deny his Lord. Covering his face in shame he rushed out into the night, and there in the darkness he wept bitterly.

It is most significant that Mark, writing Peter's Gospel for him, as we believe, dropped the sad incident right here, as if his sin was so great that it did not deserve forgiveness; though he did record that word of the angel at the tomb, "Go, tell his disciples and Peter," as if Peter were no longer worthy to be called a disciple. It was left for John to record Peter's full restoration to discipleship; and it remained for Luke, in the Acts, to show how Peter became a valiant soldier of the cross, winning in that very Jerusalem three thousand in a single day to serve the Lord whom he had denied.

"If Peter's fall is a warning against over-confidence, his restoration ought to be an antidote to all despair. The greatest sin we can commit against Christ is to despair of his grace." — *William M. Taylor*.

II. CHRIST BEFORE PILATE, Mark 15:1-5. Christ's trial before the Jewish authorities "was nearly the last, perhaps strictly the last meeting of the



The Remorse of Judas.

Edward Armitage.

Sanhedrin in the hall Gazith, for just about this time its sessions were transferred to the bazaars. While the Sanhedrists were filing out from the hall (in the meeting mentioned in verse 1), Judas the traitor, who had been lurking around and now saw Jesus led away sentenced, being smitten with remorse, rushed in among them with the cry, 'I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood.' 'What is

that to us?' said they; 'see thou to it.' He offered the thirty pieces of silver to them, saying, 'Take back.' They refused. Then he cast the moneys down upon the floor of the Sanctuary, and ran out of the temple by the tunnel to the southern gateway, ran through Ophel and out the city-gate, passed the pool of Siloam, crossed the ravine, climbed the hill beyond to a worn-out potter's field, and there hanged himself. The Sanhedrists gathered up the pieces of silver and gave them to the chief priests, who said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the sacred treasury, since it is the price of blood.' Ultimately they bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in, which was thenceforth called Akeldama, or the Field of Blood.' — *Prof. Noah K. Davis, Ph.D.*

PILATE'S EXAMINATION. I. And straightway in the morning. One of the rules of the Sanhedrin was that no criminal trial could be conducted in the night, when the judges would be weary. Jesus had been tried and condemned in the night, but

1. And straightway in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him up to Pī'-lāte.

2. And Pī'-lāte asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering saith unto him, Thou sayest.

to give a show of legality to the matter a hasty formal trial was held the following morning. Even thus, however, the trial was illegal, for another Sanhedrin rule required the intermission of a day between a trial and a verdict of guilty, though a man might be acquitted the same day as his trial. But the trial of Jesus was illegal in many other respects; indeed, in all respects. **The chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council.** The "council" or Sanhedrin was the chief legislative and judicial body of the Jews. It had seventy-one members, including the high priest, who was its president; the chief priests, who were former high priests or heads of the twenty-four courses of priests ministering in the temple; with representatives of the elders (heads of the Jewish clans or families) and scribes (lawyers, or teachers and interpreters of the Jewish laws). All Jewish officialdom centered in this august body. **Held a consultation.** This was the last of the various trials of Jesus before the Jewish authorities. **And bound Jesus.** They were dealing, they knew, with a man of wonderful powers, and they wished to prevent his escape by force. Little did they realize how easily their Prisoner could break every chain and level the walls of every prison, if he chose. **And carried him away, and delivered him up to Pilate.** The Romans had taken from the Jews the right to execute convicts, reserving that authority to themselves; therefore, though the Sanhedrin had pronounced a verdict which would according to their law be followed by death, they were obliged to turn to the Roman governor to put their verdict in force. This governor or procurator was the fifth in the series, Pontius Pilate by name, a cruel, corrupt, oppressive, and greedy ruler, though at Christ's trial he showed himself to be not devoid of the Roman sense of justice, but too weak to do what he knew justice required. His seat of government was Cæsarea on the Mediterranean, but disorders were so common in Jerusalem during passover week that he came to the city in order to quell such disturbances as might arise. Tacitus in his *Annals* (XV. 44) names him as the procurator who "punished" Christ in the reign of the Emperor Tiberius. His *prætorium* or judgment hall may have been in the Castle of Antonia or in the splendid marble palace built by Herod the Great.



Pilate. M. Munkacsy.

Detail from "Christ before Pilate."

2. And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? The Jews had not entered the *prætorium*, for to go into a Gentile abode would defile them for the passover week. Pilate therefore went out to them, received the prisoner, heard their charge against him, and then went into the *prætorium* to examine Jesus privately. It is clear from this question that the Jews had shifted their charge against Jesus. Before the Sanhedrin he was charged with blasphemy and condemned on that charge: he had, it was alleged, declared himself to be the Son of God and that he would overthrow the temple and raise it up in three days. But the charge of blasphemy would have no weight whatever with Pilate, so that the Jews did not scruple illegally to change that accusation and declare that Jesus was guilty of sedition, setting himself up as King of the Jews in defiance of the Emperor Tiberius and of his governor, Pilate — a charge of which Pilate must take cognizance. What ground the Jews had for this charge was Christ's frequent references to "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven," which every honest hearer knew to have a spiritual, and not at all a political, meaning. **And he answering saith unto him, Thou sayest.** John's Gospel goes into fuller details. Christ first asked Pilate whether he asked the question of his own motion, or the Jews had put the question into his mouth; and then

3. And the chief priests accused him of many things.
4. And Pi'-lāte again asked him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they accuse thee of.
5. But Jesus no more answered anything; insomuch that Pi'-lāte marvelled.
6. Now at the feast he used to release unto them one prisoner, whom they asked of him.
7. And there was one called Bār-āb'-bās, *lying* bound with them that had made insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed murder.
8. And the multitude went up and began to ask him *to do* as he was wont to do unto them.

he went on to explain that, though he did intend to set up a kingdom, it was not a worldly kingdom, but was wholly apart from secular matters, a kingdom of holy living, a kingdom of the soul. "Thou sayest" is not an evasion, but is a definite, idiomatic affirmation, thus modified and explained.

3. **And the chief priests accused him of many things.** Pilate, after this examination of Jesus, went out to the Jewish delegation and told them that he regarded Christ as innocent (John 18 : 38; Luke 23 : 4); but they raised a great clamor and accused Christ of stirring up the people by his teachings, which he had spread from Galilee to Jerusalem (Luke 23 : 5). It was this mention of Galilee, which was in the territory ruled by Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist, which led Pilate to seek a way out of his perplexity by sending Christ to Herod as being in his jurisdiction, Herod also being in Jerusalem for the feast. But Herod Antipas, after questioning Jesus and mocking him, sent him back to Pilate, not finding any ground for condemnation.

4. **And Pilate again asked him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they accuse thee of.** Jewish prisoners were commonly most vociferous in pleading their own cases and crying their innocence. Christ's dignified and impressive silence was a new thing in Pilate's experience.

5. **But Jesus no more answered anything; insomuch that Pilate marvelled.** Why did Christ refuse to answer his accusers? Did he not by his silence run the risk of losing his case by default? Not at all, for both Pilate and Herod saw through the flimsy charges, and perceived the pique, jealousy, and bigotry which prompted them. Both rulers declared Christ innocent. Our Lord would not come down to the level of his foes by pleading against their false charges. His silence was his wisest plea, for it virtually said to Pilate, "I put myself in your hands; I trust you to do me justice; my pure life needs no defence." So when the Christian is assailed by harsh criticism and slander it is usually a foolish waste of time and strength to reply.

III. **PILATE'S SURRENDER TO THE MOB,** Mark 15 : 6-15. 6. **Now at the feast he used to release unto them one prisoner, whom they asked of him.** "This custom was probably introduced by the Roman governors, since there is no other mention of such a custom by the Hebrews. The Latins, however, and the Greeks also, had a practice of this kind, in honor of their gods. But some suppose this to have been an ancient Hebrew custom, in honor of the exodus from Egypt, and maintained as a collateral part of the passover feast, and observed by the Roman governors." — *John Walter Good, Ph.D.*

7. **And there was one called Barabbas, lying bound with them that had made insurrection.** Some important manuscripts of Matt. 27 : 16 give his name as *Jesus* Barabbas, a strange coincidence. The Jews were so bitterly hostile toward their Roman ruler, and of so independent and brave a spirit, that they were constantly engaged in rebellions, which the Romans put down only by constant watchfulness and strenuous efforts. Pilate knew all the time that he was sitting over a volcano. **Men who in the insurrection had committed murder.** They had probably killed some Roman soldiers, an act which they would regard as a patriotic triumph.

8. **And the multitude went up and began to ask him to do as he was wont to do unto them.** John 18 : 39 assigns to Pilate the initiative in this matter. Perhaps the people first brought it up and the Roman governor quickly caught at what seemed a good opportunity to avoid condemning an innocent man.

9. And Pi'-lāte answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10. For he perceived that for envy the chief priests had delivered him up.

11. But the chief priests stirred up the multitude, that he should rather release Bār-āb'-bās unto them.

12. And Pi'-lāte again answered and said unto them, What then shall I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13. And they cried out again, Crucify him.

9. And Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Pilate knew how popular Jesus had been among the people, and used the title which he had come to associate with him, expecting thus to turn the people's choice toward the leader from whom they expected so much. Pilate must have known the royal honors given Jesus in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem that week.

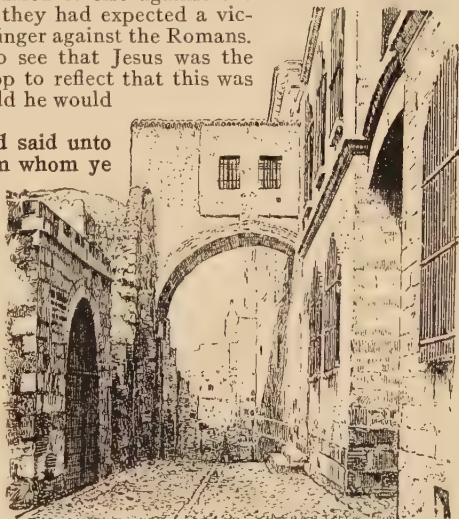
10. For he perceived that for envy the chief priests had delivered him up. Pilate was keen, and at once saw that the Jewish authorities feared Christ's influence with the people. He therefore turned from the chief priests to the crowd, expecting his proposal to be greeted by them with so great a clamor of joy as to drown out whatever protests their religious leaders might make.

11. But the chief priests stirred up the multitude, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. This was done the more easily because Barabbas was a popular hero; moreover, he had actually dared to rise against the Romans, whereas Christ, from whom they had expected a victorious insurrection, had not lifted his finger against the Romans. By this time the people had come to see that Jesus was the Prince of Peace, and they did not stop to reflect that this was exactly what the Scriptures had foretold he would be.

12. And Pilate again answered and said unto them, What then shall I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? Pilate

was doubtless amazed and disappointed at this result. Jesus had been delivered up to him on the ground that he was seeking to raise an insurrection against Rome, and here were the Jews clamoring for the release, not of Jesus, but of the worst insurrectionist of them all! He was shrewd enough to see what this meant, that Jesus was the reverse of a seditious leader, but he was too timid and weak to act justly. In no way did he disclose his weakness more than by this question—a judge asking the prosecutors what disposition should be made of the accused who had been declared innocent by the judge!

13. And they cried out again, Crucify him. "Meanwhile a message from his wife had increased Pilate's unwillingness to condemn Jesus (Matt. 27:19); so next he appealed to the pity of the crowd by presenting Jesus after he had been scourged and crowned with thorns. But to Pilate's 'Behold the man!' the cry again was, 'Crucify, crucify!' (John 19:1-5). This obstinate persistence roused Pilate's obstinacy, and he came back to the position he had taken at the outset; with a sneer at the helplessness of the Jews he said, 'Take him yourselves, and crucify him; for I find no crime in him' (John 19:6). Now, the rulers abandoned the political charges, and for the first time revealed the religious charge: 'We have a law, and by that law he ought to die because he made himself the Son of God.' Whatever Pilate may have understood by the term, 'the Son of God,' his superstitious dread of Jesus was increased; and after another private examination, he dramatically



From a photograph by Wilson.

The Ecce Homo Arch.

14. And *Pi'-lāte* said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out exceedingly, Crucify him.

15. And *Pi'-lāte*, wishing to content the multitude, released unto them *Bār-āb'-bās*, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

and impressively washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see ye to it.' The people, unmoved by his act, replied, 'His blood be on us, and on our children' (Matt. 27:24, 25; John 19:7-12); and the rulers began to utter openly the grim threat, whose silent force had kept Pilate in dread of displeasing them, that they would denounce him to Tiberius as a traitor if he released Jesus. This was their final weapon, and it ended the struggle. A hint of disloyalty carried to the savage, suspicious emperor would end Pilate's career and probably his life; the danger must be averted even at the cost of the prisoner's life. Accordingly he prepared to pronounce the desired sentence. And yet he could not help making one more appeal; or it may have been a sarcasm. As Jesus was brought out before the people, he said, 'Behold your king! Shall I crucify your king?' And the chief priests answered, 'We have no king but Cæsar.' They stated truly the position of the Sadducees, but the silent acquiescence of the Pharisees at any other time would have been impossible; for such a statement was political and religious suicide. Then Pilate pronounced sentence (John 19:12-16), and Jesus was handed over to the Roman soldiers." — *Prof. William Bancroft Hill, D.D.*

14. And Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? The comparison and combination of the Gospel accounts given above show how condensed is the story in Mark. This question of Pilate's summarizes much that the other Gospels relate more fully. Pilate was thoroughly convinced that an innocent and upright man stood before him. But they cried out exceedingly, Crucify him. The outcry of an Eastern mob far exceeds in vehemence anything that our more phlegmatic western temper can produce.

15. And Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, released unto them Barabbas. For a moment's safety, Pilate bartered away his eternal salvation. That he might be a little more popular in his tumultuous province, or at least a little less unpopular, he won for himself universal and lasting execration. And, after all, "Pilate's government came to an abrupt end. A certain Samaritan persuaded his countrymen that if they would go with him up Mount Gerizim he would show them where certain vessels of the tabernacle had been hidden by Moses. It was a mere pretext, the plotter doubtless knowing that Moses never was at Mount Gerizim. But multitudes were willing to accompany the demagogue up the mountain. As they carried arms, Pilate seized all the ways to Gerizim with horse and foot soldiers, and attacking the mass of the professed treasure-seekers at a village at the foot of the mount, slew a great many, securing others and sending them to be executed. The Samaritans forwarded a complaint against Pilate to his immediate superior, Vitellius, president of Syria. Vitellius appointed a new procurator, and ordered Pilate to proceed to Rome to answer to the emperor for his conduct. Before Pilate arrived Tiberius had died, March 16, A.D. 37. It is reported that Pilate was banished to Vienne, on the Rhone, in the south of France, and ultimately committed suicide." — *Prof. John D. Davis, Ph.D., D.D.*

And delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. "The Roman scourging was horribly severe. Drops of lead and small, sharp-pointed bones were often plaited into the scourges, and the sufferers not infrequently died under the infliction. That the soldiers could not have performed their duty with forbearance on this occasion



Roman Scourges.

was horribly severe. Drops of lead and small, sharp-pointed bones were often plaited into the scourges, and the sufferers not infrequently died under the infliction. That the soldiers could not have performed their duty with forbearance on this occasion

is plain from the wanton malice with which they added mockery to the scourging." — *Cambridge Bible*. See Mark 15: 16-20.

OUR LORD ON TRIAL TO-DAY. Let us not blame the Jews too bitterly. Unjust, bigoted, and cruel though they were, and fearful as was their sin in persecuting and delivering to death the Son of God, the world's Redeemer, let us remember that our Lord chose that people for his incarnation; that Jesus was a Jew; that the Jews furnished Peter and John and James and most of the early Christians; that Paul was a Jew, and at first a persecutor as cruel as any in the mob that cried "Crucify him!" And above all let us look to the present world and note its treatment of Jesus Christ twenty centuries after his death on the cross.

For our Lord is still on trial, and his foes crucify him afresh yearly and daily. Not yet, though his commands are well obeyed by many individual Christians — an increasing number, — do his teachings rule generally in society, in business, in politics, in international life. Still war shrieks defiance at the Prince of Peace. Only one great nation has yet said No to the liquor traffic, and that half-heartedly. Still selfish ambition is dominant, and no nation has yet become first through seeking to be the last of all and the servant of the other nations. Still Christianity on any large scale has not even been tried. Still, in spite of our words of allegiance, Christ is tried by the Sanhedrins and Pilates of to-day, and is led out to ever-new Calvaries.

This lesson should set us to earnest and honest thinking. How far are we ourselves responsible for this sad delay in the coming of Christ's kingdom? How much are we really doing to free Christ from the chains of bigotry and hatred and timidity and selfishness and greed and ambition, and place him on his rightful throne? If we answer these questions honestly, our just condemnation of the Jews of A.D. 30 will be shifted to our present generation.

"The Lord Christ wanted a tongue one day
To speak a message of cheer
To a heart that was weary, worn, and sad,
And weighed with doubt and fear.
He asked me for mine, but 'twas busy quite
With my own affairs from morn till night.

"The Lord Christ wanted a hand one day
To do a loving deed;
He wanted two feet, on an errand for him
To run with gladsome speed.
But I had need of my own that day;
To his gentle beseeching I answered 'Nay!'

"So all that day I used my tongue,
My hands, and my feet as I chose.
I said some hasty, bitter words
That hurt one heart, God knows.
I busied my hands with worthless play,
And my wilful feet went a crooked way.

"And the dear Lord Christ — was his work undone
For lack of a willing heart?
It is through men that he speaks to men,
His men must do their part.
He may have used another that day,
But I wish I had let him have his way."

— Alice J. Nichols.

LESSON XII (25). — June 17.

THE CRUCIFIXION. — Mark 15: 16-47.

PRINT vs. 22-26, 33-39.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* — ROM. 5: 8.

Devotional Reading: Isa. 53: 7-12.

Primary Topic: JESUS DIED FOR US.

Lesson Material: Mark 15: 22-26, 33-39.

Memory Verse: Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures. 1 Cor. 15: 3.

Junior Topic: CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS.

Lesson Material: Mark 15: 22-26; 33-39.

Memory Verse: 1 Cor. 15: 3.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: WHY JESUS CHOSE THE CROSS.

Topic for Young People and Adults: THE MEANING OF THE CROSS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes have here a sad lesson, the saddest of all lessons; but they are not too young to learn what Jesus suffered for them, and what they owe him in return. Emphasize the heroic

elements of the event rather than the tragic elements. Make this an evangelistic lesson, showing your pupils that the Christian church is built upon the cross.

The Older Classes will make this lesson a study of the great central doctrine of

the atonement. While you will review the course of the Divine Tragedy, you will spend most time on its inner meaning. Bring out the relation of the event to all history, and also to individual privilege, blessing, and duty.

Suggested Question for Discussion : What are we to think of the religions and the religious teachers that reject the Christian doctrine of the atonement ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Christ hung on the cross from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

Place. — The hill called Calvary or Golgotha, outside the wall of Jerusalem, probably to the north.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Sweetapple's *The Earthly Footsteps of Jesus*. Holland's *Good Friday*. Beecher's *Sermons*, Vol. 1. Bishop Alexander's *Verbum Crucis*. Horton's *The Caricoms of St. Mark*. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Vol. 15. Moxom's *The Religion of Hope*. White's *Echoes from a Sanctuary*. Macmillan's *The Mystery of Grace*. Lees's *Life of Christ*. Paterson-Smyth's *A People's Life of Christ*. Dawson's *Life of Christ*. Morrison's

The Unlighted Lustré. Simpson's *Christus Crucifixus*. Arnot's *The Anchor of the Soul*. Beibitz's *Gloria Crucis*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The possible sites of Calvary.

Contrasted spectators at the crucifixion.

Supernatural accompaniments of the crucifixion.

Christ's seven "words from the cross."

The cross the climax of Christ's life.

The doctrine of the atonement in Christ's preaching.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Christ Died to Save Us from Our Sins.

I. THE SAVIOUR CRUCIFIED, vs. 16-26.

The mocking.

The sorrowful way.

At Calvary.

The meaning of the cross.

II. THE SAVIOUR ON THE CROSS, vs. 27-47.

The two robbers.

The mocking crowd.

The seven words from the cross.

The burial of Jesus.

Accepting the atonement.

I. THE SAVIOUR CRUCIFIED, vs. 16-26. We now reach the saddest of all Bible lessons, and yet in its inner meaning and results the most glorious and triumphant.

We are to study the greatest event in all history, the climax of the life of Jesus Christ. It is the Bible's Holy of Holies. Let us approach it in the spirit of reverence and prayer.

THE MOCKING. After the sentencing of Jesus by Pilate the entire cohort which formed Pilate's guard was brought together. The news had spread that they had as their prisoner the king of the despised Jews, and that he was to be crucified. Rare sport was promised, and they proceeded to make full use of the opportunity. In lieu of the Emperor's long purple robe they threw over Jesus the rough red cloak of a Roman soldier. Taking one of the many thorny bushes which grow so luxuriantly in Palestine, they made a crown of it in imitation of the laurel wreath worn by the Emperor, and pressed it down over his forehead till the blood gushed from the wounds of the thorns. They put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, and bowed before him in mock obedience. Then they snatched the reed from his hands and beat him with it over the head, and showed their contempt by spitting on him. All of this the divine



Via Dolorosa.
(Showing the Tower of Antonia.)

22. And they bring him unto the place Göl'-gō-thà, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23. And they offered him wine mingled with myrrh : but he received it not.

Sufferer bore in silence, doubtless lifting many a prayer for the ignorant and brutal torturers.

THE SORROWFUL WAY. Restoring to Christ his own garments, the soldiers led him from Pilate's palace to the place of execution outside the city. The route through Jerusalem cannot be traced, since it is not known where Pilate's palace was or where Jesus was crucified. A tradition no older than the twelfth century points out the road now called the Via Dolorosa or Sorrowful Way, which extends from the Tower of Antonia to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

One incident of the toilsome walk is given by Mark. It was the custom to compel the criminal to carry his own cross, or at least the heavy upright portion. As our Lord passed through the city gate he fell beneath this burden, being quite broken by the horrible scourging he had received, and the soldiers seized upon a man named Simon who was coming in from the country, and compelled him to carry Christ's cross the rest of the way — an inestimable privilege for which he must have been grateful in heaven through all the ages since. He was a man of Cyrene in North Africa, the father of two sons, Alexander and Rufus, who probably rose to eminence afterward in the church and so are named here by Mark.

AT CALVARY. 22. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. "Golgotha" is the Hebrew (Aramaic) word meaning "a skull" and "Calvary" is the English form of a Latin word of the same meaning. The name was given to a bare hill outside the walls of Jerusalem, probably to the north, having the shape of a skull, perhaps with two caves in its side which looked from a distance like eye-sockets. A continuous tradition from the time of Constantine declares that Golgotha was situated where the Church of the Holy



Calvary and Its Vicinity. From a photograph by Bonfils.

Sepulchre now is, in the northwest quarter of modern Jerusalem, but the city wall of Christ's time may have inclosed this region. If it did, the site cannot be the correct one, as no execution would be allowed within the Holy City. Thomson considered Calvary to have been on the west bank of the Kidron north of St. Stephen's Gate ; Wilson placed it northeast of Herod's Gate ; others have placed it northeast of the Damascus Gate, north of the present wall.

23. And they offered him wine mingled with myrrh ; but he received it not. Taking the suggestion of Prov. 31 : 6 : "Give strong drink to him that is perishing, and wine to those whose soul is in bitterness," the rich ladies of Jerusalem were in the habit of providing kindly for the wretches condemned to crucifixion a strong aromatic wine, for the purpose of lessening their agony by deadening their faculties. Our Lord chose to keep his mind unclouded to the last, and therefore refused the potion. And what magnificent use he made of his brain and voice during those closing, bitter, and terrible hours !

24. And they crucify him, and part his garments among them, casting lots upon them, what each should take.

25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26. And the superscription of his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

24. **And they crucify him.** Crucifixion is the most horrible of all tortures invented by cruel man. There were several forms of crosses. The simplest was a mere stake driven through the body. Other crosses were in the shape of an X or a T. From the mention of the inscription placed above Christ's head, it is clear that none of these forms were used, but the cross was of the traditional form, an upright, with a cross-piece a foot or two down. To the latter Christ's outstretched hands were nailed, while his feet, placed together, were nailed to the upright. Between his hands and his feet was probably a rough projection on which his body rested. On such a cross the naked body was left to hang sometimes for days, till the loss of blood, the pain of the festering wounds, and above all the torture of thirst, brought the welcome release of death. **And part his garments among them, casting lots upon them, what each should take.** A quaternion, or four Roman soldiers, in command of a centurion, kept guard over each of the three prisoners, to see that their friends did not cut them down and take away their bodies. The clothing of the condemned was a perquisite of these soldiers. One of the number would be sure to have dice, and they probably cast the dice into one of their helmets. Separating Christ's outer garment into four parts at the seams, they divided it among them; but when they came to his inner garment they found that it, like a priest's robe, was woven in one piece throughout, having no seam. If they had cut it into four parts they would have ruined it, and so they cast lots for it, thus unwittingly fulfilling the prophecy of Ps. 22: 18.

25. **And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.** Sunrise was reckoned as beginning the day, and it occurred at about 6 o'clock at this time of year. "The third hour" was therefore about 9 o'clock in the morning, as we reckon time.

26. **And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.** It was customary to print the criminal's name and his crime on a board which was borne before him or hung on his neck as he was marched to the place of execution, and afterward nailed to his cross. The full form of the title is given by John: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Pilate himself prescribed the title, in grim sarcasm against the Jews. The priests asked him to change it to a statement that Jesus had claimed to be king of the Jews, but with the obstinacy of a weak man Pilate held to his petty revenge for being forced to do a great wrong. John tells us that the inscription was written in three languages, — the official Latin, the common Greek, and the Hebrew which even an unlearned Jew could read. Thus Pilate's spite in reality proclaimed the universality of the Gospel, that Christianity was to go "into all the world," as Christ had commanded.

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS. "There is a beautiful picture by Ribalta which depicts the cross-bearing. Christ, robed in a rough ascetic mantle, is walking along a narrow mountain track. He is alone and unattended, with the cross upon his shoulder. The picture is, of course, not true to outward fact, for Jesus bore his cross in a crowd. But it is true symbolically and spiritually, for in a real sense he bore it alone, and of the people there was none with him. It was inevitable that Christ should bear the cross alone. None could aid him in the carrying of this burden. For the cross represents human sin. On the cross Christ, the Son of God, was man's representative. The majesty of God's eternal law was vindicated there. Christ, the divine Son, stood in the sinner's place, and suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Thus the cross becomes the hope of men. For the cross says that the penalty of past sin may be removed. Christ has borne it." — *Rev. H. D. S. Sweetapple, D.D.*

"Christ was the king of the world, of time and of eternity, just because he was the crowned Sufferer. Other crowns flashed splendor from stones beyond price, but no stone ever yet was to be valued with these spines for glorious beauty. Every thorn in that crown is a symbol of divine love." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

II. THE SAVIOUR ON THE CROSS, vs. 27-47. THE TWO ROBBERS. On either side of the Son of God a robber was crucified, fulfilling the prophecy that he should be "numbered with the transgressors." The object probably was to give

33. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Ē-lō'-ī, Ē-lō'-ī, lā'-mā sā-bāch-thā'-nī? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

the impression that Jesus was no better than they. "As if to gain the approbation of the rulers by joining in their taunts and possibly a mitigation of his penalty through their aid, one of the bandits on the cross beside the suffering Jesus cried, 'If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us.' His companion in crime had looked on Jesus, and something in the vision filled his heart with a strange emotion. Deep in his soul something stirred, so small, so fine, so keen and leavening, his conscience awakened, a new life moving within him entered into a new experience. He rebuked the railing thief, and turning to Jesus he said, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' He sought not safety for a life on earth, he saw the certainty of a life in eternal fellowship of Jesus. He was the first man to gain that sight, and Jesus confirmed his faith in future glory, and set the freedom of the malefactor's soul in his own keeping." — *Rev. G. Robinson Lees.*

THE MOCKING CROWD. "That Calvary crowd, presenting the world in miniature in its attitude to the Christ, held prejudiced bitter enemies, and the evangelists in their soreness give them especial prominence. There were taunts and jeers and triumphant sneering that he had met the fate which he deserved; and the priests and Pharisees and leaders of the Jews were not ashamed to demean themselves by shouting with the rabble: 'If thou be the Son of God, come down now from the cross! Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down that we may believe! He saved others, himself he cannot save!' He hears it. He knows it. Himself he cannot, must not, save." — *J. Paterson-Smyth, D. C. L.*



The Crucifixion. Murillo.

THE SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS. 33. **And when the sixth hour was come.** It was 12 o'clock, high noon. **There was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.** The ninth hour would be three o'clock in the afternoon. "The darkness was not that of an eclipse, but the precursor of seismic disturbance. It was within three hours of the moment when 'the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.' That darkness, by some preordained harmony, was in sympathy with the anguish of the dying Lord of heaven and earth." — *Bishop William Alexander.* It could not have been caused by an eclipse of the sun, for the moon was full, it being passover. A darkening of the sky very frequently precedes earthquakes.

34. **And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach-thani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** Christ's physical vigor, after those hours of terrible suffering, preceded by the agony of Gethsemane, the repeated trials, the mocking and the scourging, was made manifest by the loudness of this cry, so far from the feeble wail of a frame at the point of exhaustion. Christ the Carpenter had a body inured to toil. He had lived an open-air life. When he died, he laid down his life of himself, it was not taken from him. This cry is the only one of Christ's seven recorded utterances on the cross which Mark set down. It is given in the Aramaic, which was evidently the language ordinarily used by our Lord, and is translated by Mark for the benefit of his Gentile readers. It is a quotation of Ps. 22: 1, in which David, Christ's great human ancestor, expressed in his sorrow his feeling that God had deserted him. The cry takes us to the most terrible depth of suffering reached by the Saviour, for he could have

35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah.

36. And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down.

37. And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38. And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom.

39. And when the centurion, who stood by over against him, saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

endured any other affliction rather than the sense of abandonment by his heavenly Father.

THE OTHER "WORDS FROM THE CROSS." 1. *The Word of Forgiveness*, spoken at the height of the agony, when the cross, bearing the tortured Saviour, was lifted up and dropped with a horrible wrench into the socket prepared for it: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 34).

2. *The Word of Restoration*, spoken to the repentant robber: "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23: 43).

3. *The Word of Affection*, spoken to Mary, his mother, and to John, his beloved disciple, commending her to his care: "Woman, behold, thy son! . . . Behold, thy mother!" (John 19: 26, 27.)

4. *The Word of Desolation*, uttered in the darkness which shrouded the earth and in the deeper gloom which filled the Redeemer's soul (given above).

5. *The Word of Physical Suffering*, spoken after the fever of his wounds under the burning sun had parched his body beyond endurance: "I thirst" (John 19: 28).

6. *The Word of Achievement*, spoken at the close of his sacrificial sufferings: "It is finished" (John 19: 30) — one word in the Greek; it has been called "the greatest single word ever uttered."

7. *The Word of Committal*, spoken just before the Saviour rendered up his life: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23: 46).

35. **And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah.** These bystanders either misunderstood the first word of Christ's cry, or ironically pretended to. It was the universal expectation among the Jews that the great prophet Elijah would return to earth before the coming of the Messiah. John the Baptist was Christ's Elijah, his prophesied herald, but the Jews did not recognize this, and regarded what they thought the failure of Elijah as fatal to Christ's Messianic claims.

36. **And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed and gave him to drink.** John 19: 29 names the reed, the stem of the hyssop plant, a wall plant, possibly the caper, used in some of the Jewish religious ceremonies. The "vinegar" was the sour wine used by the soldiers, a vessel of which was standing near. It was given to assuage the intense agony of thirst which Christ was experiencing, and which he had expressed in a terrible cry (John 19: 28). This was no stupefying draught such as he had refused earlier in the day. The use of the reed shows that our Lord's body was elevated on the cross so high that his head could not be reached by a man standing on the ground. **Saying, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down.** The crowd seems to have objected to this act of mercy and to have tried to prevent it. "Let me alone," says the man who offered the wine; "I will prolong his life a little, so that we may see whether Elijah will come and take him down from the cross."

37. **And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.** "It is finished," he shouted like a conqueror, again by the strength of his voice proving that physical death was far away except as he might yield up his life of his own accord. He gave up the ghost, he surrendered his life, it was not taken from him. His last words were, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

38. **And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom.** There was a heavy curtain before the Holy Place, but this "veil" was between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, shutting off the ark of the covenant, with its mercy seat and the cherubim bending over it. The curtain was very thick and heavy, and was twenty feet long and thirty feet broad. Its colors were purple and gold, and figures of cherubim were woven in it. The rending of this veil signified (Heb.

9 : 3 ; 10 : 10) that now by the death of Christ, the great High Priest, the infinite Sacrifice, believers have direct access to the Father, the ancient mode of approach through the priesthood and through animal sacrifices being done away. Matthew tells us of the great earthquake which accompanied the death of the Son of God, and which was doubtless the physical means of rending the veil of the temple. It was so violent that the tombs themselves were torn open, and many of God's saints rose from the dead and appeared to many in Jerusalem (Matt. 27 : 51-53).

39. **And when the centurion, who stood by over against him, saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.** The centurion was in charge of the Roman soldiers, and stood facing the three crosses to see that the decreed punishments were carried out. Like all the centurions mentioned in the New Testament, this Roman appears to have been a man of noble character, ready to respond to good influences. The accounts in the other Gospels hardly lead us to think that he used the term, "the Son of God," in a Messianic sense, but he was tremendously impressed by the heroic and majestic bearing of Jesus, so different from what he was accustomed to see in his prisoners, and by the supernatural accompaniments of his death. He had caught up the words, "the Son of God," from some bystander, and he was ready to believe that Jesus was more than a mere man. It is possible, also, that he had heard Jesus preach, or had been under Christian instruction from one of the disciples.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS. "In the ordinary course of things the dead body would have been left upon the cross until the vultures had destroyed it ; but this last indignity was not to be. Perhaps the priests were anxious to remove at once the dreadful witness of their crime ; it is at least certain that they raised no objection to the burial of Jesus. One of the secret followers of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, together with Nicodemus, at once went to Pilate, and obtained permission to remove the body. The garden at the foot of Golgotha belonged to Joseph, and in the limestone cliff at the north of the garden he had already built for himself a sepulchral chamber. To this chamber the body was borne. Nicodemus had brought with him myrrh and aloes, with which the body was anointed ; it was then wrapped in linen grave-clothes and laid in the tomb." — *Rev. William J. Dawson, D.D.* Joseph was "a councillor of honorable estate," seemingly a member of the Sanhedrin like Nicodemus.

ACCEPTING THE ATONEMENT. "O listen, ye that are not upon Christ's side openly, ye that have never worn his livery, nor manifestly entered on his service. He died for you ! These wounds were all made for you ; that bloody sweat, of which you still may see the marks upon the countenance of the Crucified, was all for you. For you the thirst and fever, for you the bowing of the head, and the giving up of the ghost ; and can you be ashamed to own him ? Will you not endure rebuke and scorn for his dear sake who bore all this for you ?" — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

"The Christian life begins at the foot of the cross ; first the reconciliation, the great forgiveness, the full atonement ; then the imitation of Christ." — *Rev. J. G. Simpson, D.D.*

"The foundation fact of the Christian life, that which alone makes it possible, is our union, through sacraments and faith, with Christ ; our actual sharing of his life, imparted by his Spirit to the members of his body. We are meant to be ever drawing upon the infinite moral resources of that life by repeated acts of faith." — *Rev. J. H. Beibitz.*

"'Now is the accepted time.' 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' Flee to the refuge. The flag that flies from its ramparts bears yet, in glad, golden letters, the divinely-dictated motto, 'Whosoever will, let him come.'"
— *William Arnot.*

LESSON XIII (26). — June 24.

REVIEW: JESUS THE SAVIOUR.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Choose you this day whom ye will serve.* — JOSH. 24 : 15.

Devotional Reading : Zeph. 3 : 14-17.

Primary Topic : JESUS TEACHES HOW TO LISTEN.

Lesson Material : Mark 4 : 1-20. Print vs. 1-9.

Memory Verse : Take heed therefore how ye hear. Luke 8 : 18.

Junior Topic : LEARNING TO LISTEN.

Lesson Material : Mark 4 : 1-20. Print vs. 1-9.

Memory Verse : Take heed therefore how ye hear. Luke 8 : 18.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : JESUS OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER.

Among the various forms of review here given, the teacher will select the form best adapted to his class, or may combine two or more plans.

I. FRIENDS AND FOES REVIEW.

For this review prepare a list of the friends of Christ mentioned in our quarter's lessons and another list of his foes that have been introduced this quarter. The names of the friends may be written separately on slips of gilt or blue paper, and those of his foes with white ink on black paper or with red ink on white paper. A week in advance let each pupil draw the name of a friend of Christ and the name of one of Christ's foes, and write a one-minute account of each, which he will read to the class on review Sunday. If necessary, some of the names will be duplicated, and if there is not time for each to read both his essays, he will read only one, "friends" and "foes" alternating. The friends will be Peter, James, John, the lad with the lunch, the rich young ruler, the owner of the colt, the man with the pitcher, Lazarus, Mary, Martha, the centurion, the repentant robber, Mary Magdalene, etc. The foes will be the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, scribes, chief priests, Judas, Caiaphas, Annas, Herod, Pilate, the unrepentant robber, etc.

II. THE FIVE-KNOTS REVIEW.

The younger classes will enjoy this form of review, for which you will use the beautiful set of Lesson Pictures published by the publishers of this volume. Take a shallow box of the size of the pictures and cut a window in the front large enough to display a picture. Remove also the top of the box, so that the pictures can be pulled up from the box through the top. Put the box in a frame about twice as high as the box, the top being a round piece of wood over which runs a string in which five knots have been made at equal intervals. Drive into the back of the round piece two tacks so close together that they will hold each knot when the string is slipped between them. The string ends in a clip which is fastened to the first picture.

The first knot stands for "Who?" and the pupil who tells who the characters are in the first picture pulls the string down to the first knot, thus raising the picture one-fifth of the way. The second knot stands for "Where?" and the pupil telling where the first picture is located pulls it up to the second knot. Thus with the other knots, which stand for "What?" (what the objects in the picture are, exclusive of the persons), "Deeds" (what the persons of the picture are doing), and "Words" (what they are saying). After each picture has been pulled all the way up, it is removed, and the string is fastened by the clip to the picture next in order. After the lesson the pictures may be distributed among the pupils as souvenirs of the quarter's work.

III. A CHRIST-CENTERED REVIEW.

This review, which may be adapted to classes of any age, considers with each lesson what it teaches about Jesus Christ, his character, nature, and teachings. The pupils may be asked to make at home a list of the lessons of the quarter, writing after each the chief fact about the Saviour which it is thought to teach. In the class you will take up the lessons one at a time, considering all the Christ-facts brought up by the class, and determining what will be regarded as the leading Christ-fact of that lesson.

IV. A PIN-CUSHION REVIEW.

Take a large pin cushion — several of them, if necessary — and pin to it a considerable number of slips of paper, each bearing a question on the lessons of the quarter. Cover all of the lessons, and write about ten questions on each lesson, bringing out all the essential facts of the several lessons — time, persons, places, other facts, sayings, teachings. Take pains to make each question perfectly clear and independent, so that an understanding of it does not depend on any other ques-

tion. Mix them all up in pinning them to the cushion. The pupils will take turns in removing a question from the cushion, reading it aloud, and answering it if possible ; if not, the pupil sitting next will have a chance. Whoever answers it correctly will keep the slip, and the pupil capturing most slips will be the victor in the contest and may receive a reward, such as a book on the life of Christ or a copy of the Gospel of Mark.

V. AN ESSAY REVIEW.

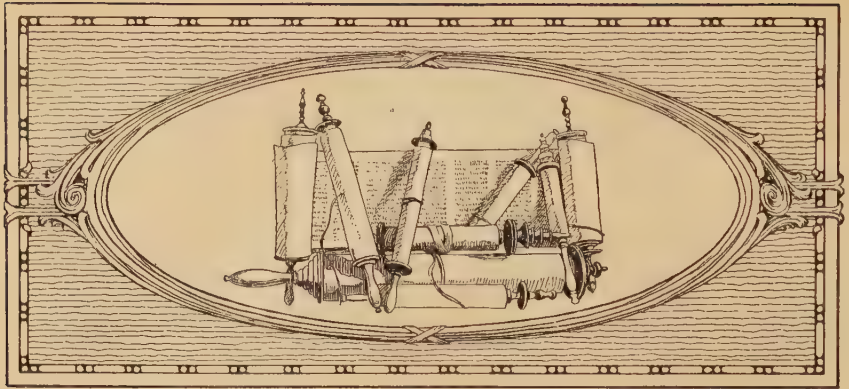
The older classes may review the quarter by means of a series of essays, each treating the central theme of one of the lessons. Limit the essays to three or four minutes, according to the time at your disposal. The following subjects are suggested :

- Lesson 1.* Crossbearing in 1928.
- Lesson 2.* Proofs of Our Immortality.
- Lesson 3.* Transfigured Lives.
- Lesson 4.* Is the Average American Home Christian ?
- Lesson 5.* The Tyranny of the Dollar.
- Lesson 6.* Ambitions Worth Cherishing.
- Lesson 7.* Signs of the Kingdom.
- Lesson 8.* Neighborliness.
- Lesson 9.* Are Modern Christians Faithful Stewards ?
- Lesson 10.* True Communion with Christ.
- Lesson 11.* Dealing Honestly with Christ.
- Lesson 12.* Crucified with Christ.

VI. A CROSS REVIEW.

Each pupil will be instructed to make at home during the week a pasteboard cross, about a foot high, covering it with gilt paper or in some other way adorning it. Then he will go over the twelve lessons of the quarter and choose from each the sentence or phrase which he regards as the central point of the lesson. He will copy each of these on a slip of paper and pin it to the cross. In the recitation you will take up the lessons one at a time, compare the extracts, and decide after discussion which most accurately represents each lesson. This extract will then be written on a large cross which the teacher will have made and brought to the class.





THIRD QUARTER.

JULY 1—SEPTEMBER 30, 1928.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL.

(FIRST HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

AIM : To discover through the life and writings of Paul (1) the elements of that growing inner experience of God in Christ which made him the outstanding missionary and teacher in the early church ; (2) practical applications of Christianity to every-day life and conduct ; (3) ways in which the rule of Christ is to be established among men.

LESSON I. — July 1.

THE EARLY LIFE OF SAUL. — Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Philippians 3:4-6; Acts 22:3, 27, 28.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* — ECCL. 12:1.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 119:33-40.

Primary Topic : THE STORY OF PAUL AS A CHILD.

Lesson Material : Acts 21:39; 22:3; 23:16; 26:4; 2 Tim. 3:15.

Memory Verse : Thy word have I laid up in my heart,
That I might not sin against thee. Ps. 119:11.

Junior Topic : THE BOYHOOD OF A GREAT PREACHER.

Lesson Material : Acts 21:39a; 22:3; 23:16; 26:4, 5; Gal. 1:14; Phil. 3:4-6.

Memory Verse : Ps. 119:11.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : SAUL'S TRAINING FOR SERVICE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : INFLUENCES SHAPING SAUL'S EARLY LIFE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be interested in learning about the Greek city of Tarsus, the shipping, the games, the industries, the heathen temples, and the way a Greek boy would be brought up. Then they will be interested in learning of the way a Jewish boy such as Saul would be educated in the same city and afterwards in Jerusalem. Emphasize the importance

of Bible study, which is as necessary and blessed for us to-day as for the Jewish boys of the first century.

The Older Classes have before them the vastly important question of education: what are its essentials, and especially the fundamental value of religious education and the study of the Bible. Consider the family life of the present day. What does it lack? What can it learn from the family life of Paul's day?



ST. PAUL.
(FROM "ST. CECILIA.")

RAPHAEL.

Teachers and parents will join in this discussion.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How can religion be brought into the home and school life of to-day ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Saul (Paul) was born about A.D. 1.

Place. — Saul was born in Tarsus, in Cilicia, the Roman province at the



St. Paul. Thorwaldsen.

northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Ancient and modern Tarsus.
Saul's home life.
Education among the Jews.
University life in Tarsus.
University life in Jerusalem.
Pharisaism.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Saul's Training for Service.

I. SAUL'S BIBLE TRAINING, Deut. 6:4-9.

Jewish children and the Book.
The Bible in Saul's life and writings. 2 Tim. 3:15.
The Bible foundation for life.

II. SAUL'S HOME TRAINING, Phil. 3:4-6.

The training of Jewish children.
Saul's boyhood surroundings. Acts 21:39; 23:16.
Christian homes and their influence.

III. SAUL AT SCHOOL IN JERUSALEM, Acts 22:3, 27, 28.

Gamaliel and Saul. Acts 26:4, 5; Gal. 1:14.
Saul's Roman citizenship.
School life that counts for God.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

David Smith's *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul*. Stevenson's *The Children's Paul*. Edersheim's *In the Days of Jesus*. Bird's *Paul of Tarsus*. Atkinson's *The Story of Paul of Tarsus*. Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. Burrell's *Life and Letters of St. Paul*. Baring-Gould's *A Study of St. Paul*. On the Deuteronomy passage, Alexander in *The Pulpit Commentary*, Jordan in *The Bible for Home and School*, and Robinson in *The New-Century Bible*. On the passage in Philipians, Moule in *The Cambridge Bible*, Martin in *The New-Century Bible*. On the Acts, Lumby in *The Cambridge Bible*. W. W. Faris's *The Christian Home*. Luccock's *The Home God Meant*. Summerbell's *Christian Home Training*. Briggs's *School, College, and Character*. Work's *The Fascination of the Book*.

DEUT. 6:4. Hear, O Is'-rā-ēl: Jê-hō'-vāh our God is one Jê-hō'-vāh:

I. SAUL'S BIBLE TRAINING, Deut. 6:4-9. JEWISH CHILDREN AND THE BOOK. "In the days of Christ the pious Jew had no other knowledge, neither sought nor cared for any other, than that of the law of God." — *Edersheim*. "Fastened to the side of Saul's father's house door was a bright metal box a few inches long, and every one who went out or in raised his hand to touch it, and kissed his finger, as he said a few words to himself; for in it were some verses of the Bible written upon parchment, and beginning with the familiar words, 'Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.' The child's first lesson was a verse from Deuteronomy, which his mother or father said to him in Greek, and he repeated over and over again until he had learned it; then he had another verse told him, to learn in the same slow way. Saul's first school lessons would be taken from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, called the Pentateuch, or five books. They were written on broad rolls, not unlike our yellow wall-papers, and were kept rolled upon two sticks, and were unrolled only a little bit at a time, at the part which was to be read." — *Robert Bird*.

4. Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. This passage, Deut. 6:4-9, together with Deut. 11:13-21 and Num. 15:37-41, "forms the famous

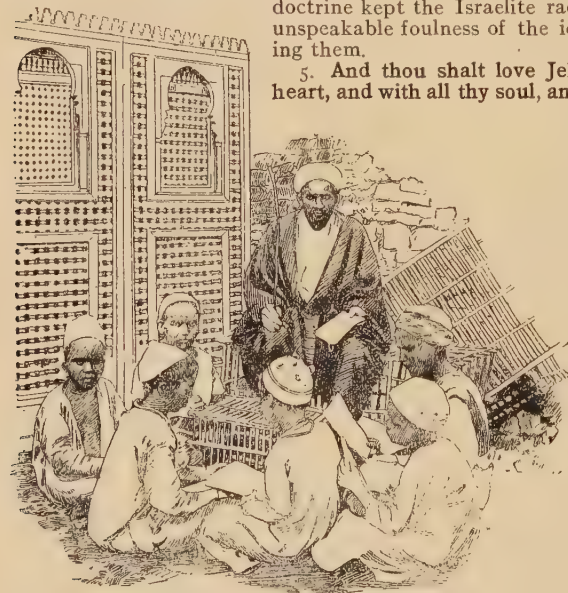
5. And thou shalt love Jê-hô'-vâh thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;

7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.

Jewish 'Shema,' appointed for recitation by every Jew morning and evening, whose name is taken from the first Hebrew word (English, 'hear'). — *H. Wheeler Robinson*. The teaching of monotheism is the chief glory of the Hebrew religion, and the doctrine kept the Israelite race a unit and free from the unspeakable foulness of the idolatrous peoples surrounding them.



From a photograph by Foster.
An Arab School.

5. And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. "The

'heart' is the inner nature of the man, including his intellectual, emotional, and conative faculties; the 'soul' is the personality, the entire self-consciousness; and the 'might' is the sum of the energies, bodily and mental." — *W. L. Alexander*. The Lord, for our good, will have nothing less than our all.

6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart. Moses is the speaker, near the end of his long life, and he is solemnly pronouncing his final instructions for his beloved people.

7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. The literal Hebrew compares these words of wisdom to a sharp weapon

which is to be driven into the children's understanding. Truth, especially religious truth, is no slight matter; receiving or rejecting it is a matter of spiritual life or death. Religious education is the most important interest of our civilization. And shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way. Family religion is the basis of the church. If we do not make the Bible and the things of the Bible central in our home life and in our friendships and conversations, we need not attempt to make them central anywhere else. And when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Let the Bible be your last thought before sleeping and your first thought as you awake. Then the night will be calm and restful and the day will be active, fruitful, and happy.

8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. "Phylacteries, called by the Rabbis *tephillin*, *prayer-fillets*, were worn on the left arm, toward the heart, and on the forehead. They were capsules containing on parchment these four passages of Scripture: Ex. 13:1-10; 13:11-16; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21. That for the head was to consist of a box with four compartments, each containing a slip of parchment inscribed with one of the four passages. Each of these slips was to be tied up with well-washed hair from

9. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

a calf's tail ; lest, if tied with wool or thread, any fungoid growth should ever pollute them. The phylactery of the arm was to contain a single slip, with the same four passages written in four columns of seven lines each. The black leather straps by which they were fastened were wound seven times round the arm and three times round the hand. They were revered by the Rabbis as highly as the Scriptures, and, like them, might be rescued from the flames on a Sabbath." — *Marvin R. Vincent*. They were to be (and are still) worn during morning prayers by male Jews.



A Jewish Synagogue.

9. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates. In obedience to this command, Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21,

written on a slip of parchment and "enclosed in a reed or cylinder, was fixed on the right-hand door-post of every room in the house." — *Pulpit Commentary*.

THE BIBLE IN SAUL'S LIFE AND WRITINGS. 2 Tim. 3:15. "At the age of six or seven Saul would be sent to the elementary school. This was connected with the local synagogue, and since the manual of instruction was the Book of the Law, it was known as 'the House of the Book.' The Aramaic vernacular would be the language of his home, and he spoke it in after days as freely as a native of Palestine ; and he would learn also the ancient Hebrew, the original language of the sacred Scriptures. But Greek was the language of a Hellenistic community, and it was the Septuagint version of the Scriptures that the Jews of Tarsus employed. It was the child's lesson-book, and his life-long familiarity with it is evidenced by his practice of quoting from it in after years. For the first three or four years the scholars in the House of the Book were instructed in the rudiments ; and then, at the age of ten, they were engaged in learning the Law, and by reason of the scarcity of books in those days when they were transcribed by hand and the difficulty of manipulating the cumbrous rolls, the method was, as it still is in the unchanging East, oral repetition (*mishnah*). The teacher read out each sentence, and the pupils recited it in chorus until they had committed it to memory. It was an effective method. One inestimable advantage of it was that every Jew's mind was stored with Holy Writ, and the inaccessibility of the sacred volume thus mattered less. It involved, however, obvious disadvantages, not the least being that a Jewish writer was apt to trust to his memory ; and this is the main reason of the general laxity and frequent inaccuracy of New Testament quotations from the Old Testament. The education of a Jewish child was thus essentially religious. And it was exclusively Jewish. The Sacred Law was the text-book, and heathen literature was ignored." — *Prof. David Smith*.

THE BIBLE FOUNDATION FOR LIFE. "The Bible as a whole is calculated to captivate the child mind. If the church truly covets the best gifts, it will not be indifferent

PHIL. 3:4. Though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more:

5. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

to the skill that interests children in the Bible. For this is in reality the laying of foundations for the Kingdom. It is truly wonderful how easily the Bible lodges itself in the memory and imagination of children. The greatest aid the home can render to religious education is the lodging in the mind of the child of a permanent interest in and affection for the Bible. Never, for one moment, permit the child to think that the Bible is a dull book." — *Rev. Edgar Whitaker Work, D.D.*

II. SAUL'S HOME TRAINING, Phil. 3:4-6. THE TRAINING OF JEWISH CHILDREN. "When Saul was thirteen all his fellow Jews looked upon him as quite a young man; and by then it had been decided that he was to become a rabbi. Rabbis were learned men who were part ministers and part teachers and part lawyers,



Women Weaving Tentcloth.

and therefore explained to other Jews all about their religion. Especially did they teach them concerning the Law; and Saul, or Paul, in his studies that were to fit him to become a teacher of others, had to commit to memory not only thousands of verses of Scripture, but much that wise men had said in explanation of them. Also there was something else he had to master. The Jews believed it was right and proper for every boy to work with his hands. They believed this partly because they knew it was good for boys to do some really hard work, and partly because boys who have learned a trade always have a chance to use it to make their living. So Saul, or Paul, was put to a trade that was much followed in Tarsus.

On the hills behind the city many goats were bred; and their hair was made into a cloth of which tents were manufactured. Saul, or Paul, was sent to a place where tents were made, and he learned how to make them. It cannot have been nice work, for goats' hair cloth is not at all like scented soap. But it was good that Saul, or Paul, became a tent-maker; for later, when he was preaching Christ in many cities, he earned money to keep himself by working at his trade." — *Rev. J. G. Stevenson.*

4. Though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh; if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more. Writing from his first Roman imprisonment to the beloved church in Philippi which he had founded, Paul warned them to beware of the leaders who would bind the young Christian church by the formalistic bonds of Judaism, including circumcision and other fleshly ordinances from which Christ had set men free. And Paul went on to say that he himself, who was giving the advice, knew well what these formal requirements were, for he had observed them all, and that with the utmost strictness.

5. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. Paul was not a proselyte from heathenism, circumcised as an adult, or an Ishmaelite, circumcised at the age of thirteen, but had been admitted to the covenant of Israel eight days after birth, and was a member of the royal tribe of Benjamin. As touching the law, a Pharisee. The Pharisees were very strict in their religious views, being extreme formalists and intensely bigoted. Gamaliel, who became Saul's teacher, "was the grandson of Hillel and followed him as a teacher. Hillel, though somewhat liberal, was so only in comparison with Shammai. Each concerned himself with trumpery questions, to the omission of the weightier matters of the Law. The party of Shammai held that the hands must be washed before a cup was filled with wine, for that otherwise the cup and its contents were rendered unclean by the perspiration from the fingers clinging to the vessel. But the party of Hillel insisted that this was not so, and there was a greater cause for fear lest the cup should contaminate the perspiration of the fingers. Therefore, they

6. As touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.

ACTS 22:3. I am a Jew, born in Tär'-sūs of Ći-lī'-ci-ā, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gă-mā'-lī-ēl, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day.

declared that the hands should be washed after the vessel had been filled. The adherents of Shammai taught that after the hands were wiped the towel should be put on the table and not on a cushion, lest the sweat from the hands should taint the cushion, which would in turn defile whatever touched it. But Hillel and his school taught that it was a serious matter to put the dirty towel on the table, for the table might render the towel unclean, and so infect with legal impurity the perspiration, and through the perspiration, the hands wiped upon it. Another matter of dispute between the two teachers was whether the hands should be washed before using the broom to sweep the house, or after the sweeping was done. Another matter in dispute was whether light was one or many; whether, that is, the light of the sun, and of the stars, the lightning and the flame were one in nature, or distinct." — *Sabine Baring-Gould*.

6. As touching zeal, persecuting the church. Paul was not only a Pharisee, but a bitter, violent, persecuting Pharisee, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. His zeal was conscientious, but he was ashamed of it, for he was "kicking against the pricks," and on account of it he called himself "the least of the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:9). As touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. Paul had observed all the Jewish legalities, he was blameless before the formal law; he knew himself to be far from blameless before the true law of God summarized by Christ as consisting of love to God and man.

SAUL'S BOYHOOD SURROUNDINGS, ACTS 21:39; 23:16. "Saul was a town boy. The spreading flower, the tinted cloud, the purple hill, the bird in flight, had no special word for him. Soldiers arming and disarming, the sign of force; trained athletes running, wrestling, boxing with mailed fists, the sign of skill; idols of wood and stone, the sign of darkness, early impressed him, and held sway to the end." — *Robert Bird*. "The little river, the Cydnus, was navigable in the days of Saul, making Tarsus the port of Cilicia, and attracting ships from all parts of the then-known world. The Cydnus was a mountain stream, bearing down the melted snows from the Taurus range. The great Alexander almost met his death by bathing in its icy waters, some three hundred years before Saul's time. The Cilician plain yielded fruits of many sorts. Apples, cherries, oranges, lemons, citron, and dates grew in abundance, in addition to the grapes which were so widely used for wine and raisins, and the olives for oil. Honey, too, would be among their delicacies. And Saul would have a chance to help in gathering and preparing these." — *Louise Warren Atkinson*.

CHRISTIAN HOMES AND THEIR INFLUENCE. "The home is the germ cell of organic Christianity. The Church is, in substantial fact, made up of godly homes rather than of individuals. So also society, and the state. The most powerful evangelism, even the Sunday school, rates far below the home as a Christian factor. Character is a bundle of habits, and these are for the most part shaped during childhood and youth. By rights this is chiefly done in the home. If parents fail here, all the preachers in Christendom can do little to repair the vital loss." — *Rev. William Wallace Faris, D.D.*

"The main thing for Christian training in the home is having the Christian atmosphere. If the father loves God and walks in his way; if the mother loves God and goes along in the same way, the child in that home will grow right up into the home love and into the love of God also. But the Christian home, which enjoys the Christian atmosphere, will give outward and visible sign of its Christian relationship and standing." — *President Martyn Summerbell*. Dr. Summerbell specifies regular church attendance as a family, the cultivation in the children of the habit of private prayer, the frequent explanation of Christian truth and application of that truth to conduct, constant use of the Bible, and the practice of family worship.

III. SAUL AT SCHOOL IN JERUSALEM, ACTS 22:3, 27, 28 (see also Acts 26:4, 5; Gal. 1:14). GAMALIEL AND SAUL. After Paul had engaged in long-continued and heroic missionary labors, spreading the gospel throughout western Asia and

27. And the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said, Yea.

Greece, he was arrested in Jerusalem because of the clamor of bigoted Jews, and the following verses are from the defence of himself which he made before them.

ACTS 22 : 3. **I am a Jew.** Though born in a Greek city, Saul was a Jew by descent. The name of his father is not known, but there is a tradition that he was a native of Gischala in northern Galilee, from which he may have been driven to Tarsus by the insurrection which followed the death of Herod the Great in B.C. 4. Saul's mother was a pious woman who dedicated her baby boy to God, and who probably died when her son was a mere infant. The family belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, small but warlike, and Saul was named from that distinguished Benjamite who became the first king of the Israelites. After the fashion of the day, he seems to have received also a Gentile name, Paulus (Paul), a Latin word meaning "little." **Born in Tarsus of Cilicia.** Cilicia is the country just north of the northeast corner of the Mediterranean, the little land northwest of Syria. It was the western capital of the joint Roman province of Syria-Cilicia, as Antioch was the eastern capital. "Tarsus" is derived from the wing (Greek, *tarsos*) of Pegasus, which is said to have fallen there. It stands in a large and fertile plain, watered by the Cydnus, with the Taurus and Amanus ridges in the background. Cleopatra once came to the city, with a gorgeous retinue, to visit Antony. Tarsus enjoyed a rich commerce, and was famous for its university, possessing a larger number of native scholars than any other city of the day with the sole exception of Alexandria in Egypt. A long list of philosophers and poets adds to the fame of Tarsus. Saul was born probably in the year 1 A.D., and he had a sister who was perhaps older than he, having been born in Galilee before the father's removal to Cilicia. Saul was thus about five years younger than Christ. **But brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel.** "This city" is Jerusalem, in which Paul was speaking. He was educated "at the feet of" Gamaliel, as Jewish teachers sat on raised platforms, their pupils literally at their feet. This teacher was "the famous Rabban Gamaliel, a son of Rabban Simeon, and a grandson of Hillel, 'a doctor of the law held in reputation among all the people.' There were only seven of the Rabbis to whom the Jews gave the title of Rabban, and three of these were Gamaliels of this family, who each in turn rose to the high distinction of *Nasi*, or President of the School. Gamaliel I., like his grandfather Hillel, held the somewhat anomalous position of a liberal Pharisee. A Pharisee in heart-felt zeal for the traditions of the fathers, he yet had none of the narrow exclusiveness which characterized Shammai, the rival of his grandfather, and the hard school which Shammai had founded. His liberality of intellect showed itself in the permission of Pagan literature; his largeness of heart in the tolerance which breathes through his speech before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5 : 33-40). There is no authority for the tradition that he was a secret Christian, but we see from the numerous notices of him in the Talmud, and from the sayings there ascribed to him, that he was a humane, thoughtful, high-minded, and religious man." — F. W. Farrar. **Instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day.** The University of Jerusalem had "at this time two schools connected with it, that of Hillel and that of Shammai, both intensely Jewish in spirit. One of the rabbis connected with the former was Gamaliel, who was everywhere known and revered as 'the Flower of the Law.' It required not less than fifteen years to complete the curriculum and graduate with the degree of 'Rabbi' or Teacher of the Law. It is scarcely necessary to say that practically the entire course of study was in the Scriptures." — Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.

27. **And the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said, Yea.** The chief captain (tribune), corresponding to our colonel, was in charge of a cohort or regiment of a thousand men. When the Jews mobbed Paul, he at once came to his rescue with soldiers and carried him off to the Roman military headquarters, Castle Antonia, next to the temple, from the stairway of which Paul had just addressed the mob. When the mob responded so violently to Paul's claims the chief captain thought he must be a dangerous man, and ordered a confession to be extorted from him by scourging; but Paul protested, claiming to be a Roman citizen, whom it was unlawful to scourge. To make a false claim to Roman citizenship was an offence so severely punished that Paul was at once believed.

28. **And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship.** Though the Romans were so proud of their citizenship, yet the favorites of the

28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, But I am a *Roman* born.

Emperor were allowed to sell that citizenship with its high privileges, and made enormous gains by doing so. And Paul said, But I am a *Roman* born. "How St. Paul came to be a Roman citizen by birth we cannot tell; probably some ancestor by meritorious conduct had been rewarded with enfranchisement. Tarsus was a free city, and had its own laws and magistrates, but that did not constitute its inhabitants Roman citizens." — *Prof. J. Rawson Lumby*.

SAUL'S ROMAN CITIZENSHIP. "Saul's father was a Roman citizen, and Saul was born into all the political privileges of the Roman state. What an advantage that was to him in all his apostolic career! He always was disposed to regard the imperial power as the friend of the Christian faith, protecting it from Jewish persecution and saving him again and again from danger to his person and life. He made most of his Roman citizenship whenever necessity demanded the declaration of it. He usually claimed all of its privileges. In all probability he was the only one among the apostles who could have done such a thing." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes*.

SCHOOL LIFE THAT COUNTS FOR GOD. "It is natural, as has been said, for boys to grow like colts, one end at a time. The pity is that the boy, who determines in a measure his own growth, should be so late in developing the power to put himself into another's place; that the best education which the country can proffer is so slow in teaching to the chosen youth of the nation the Golden Rule, or even that part of the Golden Rule which results in college honesty; that the average college boy, frank and manly as he is, is honest in spots, and shows in his honesty little sense of proportion." — *Dean Briggs of Harvard*.

The school life that will build up worthy manhood and womanhood will have back of it constantly the thought, "What would Jesus have me do?" Our study, our play, our friendships, our hopes, our ambitions, must all be such as he would approve. Other bases of school life, such as the desire for a good time, or ambition to get along in the world, or greed of applause, will mean failure of character, and that means failure in school and everywhere else. As we study with the Great Teacher, we shall study with profit also under human teachers.

LESSON II. — July 8.

SAUL AND STEPHEN. — Acts 7: 54—8: 3; 22: 3, 4, 19, 20; 26: 4, 5, 9—11; Galatians 1: 13, 14.

PRINT Acts 7: 54—8: 3; 22: 19, 20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.* — REV. 2: 10.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 116 : 12—19.

Primary Topic : SAUL'S CRUELTY TO CHRISTIAN PEOPLE.

Lesson Material : Acts 7 : 54—8 : 3 ; 22 : 3, 4, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Tim. 1 : 13 b.

Junior Topic : HOW SAUL PERSECUTED STEPHEN AND OTHERS.

Lesson Material : Acts 7 : 54—8 : 3 ; 22 : 3, 4, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : 1 Tim. 1 : 13 b.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : IS CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE ?

Topic for Young People and Adults : STEPHEN'S INFLUENCE ON SAUL.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will get a great inspiration from the story of Stephen and his heroism. Emphasize the tenderness of his nature, as shown in his care for the poor widows, and his bravery in standing

up for Christ before the Sanhedrin and in the presence of death. Show the pupils how they can combine tenderness and courage in their own lives.

The Older Classes have suggested in this lesson the important topic of bigotry and its result in persecution. In what

ways does the spirit of bigotry show itself to-day? What types of persecution are found in our free republic? How can we put down error without committing the sin of those who stoned Stephen? These are vital questions for our times.

Question Suggested for Discussion: What are the perils of the free speech and religious liberty guaranteed by the American Constitution, and how may they be avoided?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The martyrdom of Stephen took place A.D. 36.

Place. — Stephen was stoned somewhere outside the wall of Jerusalem.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The character of Stephen.
Persecution in the early days and now.
Saul's motives in persecuting the Christians.
Christian teachings regarding conscience.
Illustrations of Christian growth from persecution.
Stonings throughout the Bible.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Christian Heroism and Its Influence.

I. STEPHEN THE MARTYR, Acts 7: 54—60.

Stephen the deacon, Acts 6: 1-6.
Stephen the preacher, Acts 6: 8-10.
Stephen the persecuted, Acts 6: 11-15.
Stephen the witness, Acts 7: 1-53.
Stephen the martyr, Acts 7: 54-60.
Christian heroism.

II. SAUL THE PERSECUTOR, Acts 8: 1-3; 22: 3, 4, 19, 20; 26: 4, 5, 9-11; Gal. 1: 13, 14.

Saul in the Sanhedrin.
Saul's mistaken zeal.
Saul's cruelty.
Is conscience a safe guide?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hill's *The Apostolic Age*. Knowledge on Acts in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. Lindsay on Acts in *Handbooks for Bible Classes*. Bartlett on Acts in *The New-Century Bible*. Meyer's *Paul, a Servant of Jesus Christ*. Iverach's *St. Paul, His Life and Times*. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul*. Rowland on Stephen, in *Men of the New Testament*. Stephen, in Whyte's *Bible Characters*.

I. STEPHEN THE MARTYR, Acts 7: 54-60. STEPHEN THE DEACON (Acts 6: 1-6). The first mention of the heroic Stephen in the New Testament is in connection with the selection of the first deacons. Many poor persons joined the early church in Jerusalem, and the poor widows especially needed care. Every day food was provided for them by their more fortunate fellow Christians, and the twelve apostles took charge of the distribution. But this required much time and thought, and the Grecian widows complained that they were neglected in favor of the Hebrew widows. Therefore the apostles called the church together, told them that all their own time and strength should be devoted to preaching the new religion, and bade them select for the charitable work of the church seven men "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." This was done, and the seven chosen were called "deacons," from a Greek word meaning to serve.

Stephen was the first named in the list, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." He was a Greek, as all the others seem to have been, and his name significantly means "a crown." He was evidently a good executive, a man of force, and one in whose kindness of heart and strict justice every one could trust.

STEPHEN THE PREACHER (Acts 6: 8-10). But Stephen was not one to rest content with the distribution of food, however necessary that was. He intended to use for Christ all the powers of mind and heart which Christ had given him. The various sets of Jews from foreign lands had established in Jerusalem a number of synagogues where their respective languages were used in the services, and where those of one speech could have headquarters while in the city. In these synagogues the teachings of Jesus became matters of fierce debate, and Stephen, as the leading Greek Christian, came forward continually in those assemblies as the defender and advocate of Christian truth. In all these discussions Stephen spoke eloquently, "full of grace and power," and substantiated his claims for Christianity by working great miracles before their eyes. In short, so able was his preaching that his hearers "were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." Stephen was a model for the Christian speakers and teachers of all ages since. His wonderful sermon reported in chapter seven is doubtless a fair sample of his arguments, though Luke presents it in a form so condensed that it does not give us much idea of his style.

STEPHEN THE PERSECUTED (Acts 6: 11-15). No one likes to be worsted in an argument, and the Jews with whom Stephen debated were bitter in spirit, bigoted in the extreme, and could see no good in any one who did not think exactly as they did. They were unscrupulous in their methods, and hired false witnesses against Stephen. These wicked men declared under oath that they had heard him speak

ACTS 7:54. Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

blasphemy against Moses and against God. They probably based their first charge upon some of Stephen's citations of Christ's utterances such as those in Matt. 5: 21-48, enlarging and interpreting spiritually some of the laws of Moses; also upon Christ's declarations that he was the Son of God and equal to God himself, which Stephen would not fail to quote in preaching the Messiahship of Jesus; also upon Christ's prophecy of the destruction of the temple (Matt. 24: 2). Thus provided, the enemies of Stephen stirred up a mob, seized Stephen, and brought him before the Sanhedrin, where the false witnesses vociferously told their lies. And then, as the members of that august body looked at the accused, awaiting his defence, they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." His countenance glowed with conscious innocence, and was uplifted and inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit, who had never been so close to him as at that moment of deadly peril.

In the Sanhedrin, himself a Senator, sat Saul the Pharisee, his soul on fire with zeal for the false and narrow teachings which Stephen had been condemning. Very likely he had himself matched his intellectual powers against the young Christian in the Cilician synagogue, and was smarting under a sense of defeat. However that may have been, the nobility inherent in Saul must have responded to the soul of Stephen, and, however the Pharisee might rage, he never forgot the bearing of the prisoner, or his address which followed.

STEPHEN THE WITNESS (Acts 7: 1-53). "The speech of Stephen before the Sanhedrin is reported at fuller length than any other in Acts. Doubtless Luke got his account from Paul, who never could forget Stephen's words. The speech is a long review of Jewish history from the call of Abraham to the building of the temple. All through their history the Jews had resisted the Holy Spirit, even as they did when dealing with Jesus: — they had rejected Moses, they had turned from the tabernacle to the golden calf and the host of heaven, and they had emphasized the temple, though they had been taught that the Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands. This would not be a direct answer to the charges against Stephen, but it is an indirect answer; and — what was of more importance to him — it gave a chance to preach Jesus, through the parallelism between those ancient deeds and the present treatment of the Messiah and his spiritual lessons. The speech was never finished. As its application became cuttingly close, the Sanhedrin grew wild with rage." — *Prof. William Bancroft Hill*.

STEPHEN THE MARTYR. 54. Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart. They, the People of the Law, whose entire life, in all its minutest details, was devoted to its strictest observance, had been declared by Stephen to be unfaithful to the law. "No charge could have been more hateful to such an audience." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*. And they gnashed on him with their teeth. They raged similarly at Peter when he charged them with being the murderers of their Messiah (Acts 5: 33), but were restrained by Gamaliel. Perhaps Gamaliel was not present on this occasion, when their wrath was even more brutal.

55. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit. God's Holy Spirit, possessed by Stephen in full measure, not only gave him courage to face the Sanhedrin and mental power to address them, but clarified his spiritual vision so that he could see heaven, and the Father and the Son. He will do such things for any devout Christian. Looked up stedfastly into heaven. Stephen was not trembling with fear but was steady and calm. That was because his soul was fixed on things above. He had a mind far superior to the cruel mob. The direction of our spiritual gaze decides the kind of life we live. And saw the glory of God. Stephen had just called God "the God of glory" (verse 2); now he saw that glory — such a splendor as shone above the ark of the covenant, flamed from Sinai, and lighted the moving hosts of Israel in the fiery pillar. Paul was later to fall down before the same glory on the Damascus road. And Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Jesus had prophesied that hereafter he should be seen "sitting at the right hand of Power" (Mark 14: 62), and elsewhere in the New Testament he is described as sitting at the right hand of God, the fit position of the Son of God, reigning eternally with the Father. In Stephen's vision

56. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57. But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord;

58. And they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Jesus appeared standing, for he had risen to welcome the first martyr, who was so soon to appear before the heavenly throne.

56. **And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.** Stephen was in the council chamber of the Sanhedrin, but in his ecstatic vision the ceiling melted away, and the sky above it was cleft through, and he perceived the heaven of heavens, the central abode of Jehovah. The name given to Jesus, "the Son of man," was his favorite name for himself, and is used nowhere else in the New Testament outside the Gospels — an indication of the closeness of Stephen's spirit to that of Jesus.

57. **But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears.** When Jesus, in the presence of the Sanhedrin, asserted himself to be the Son of God (Luke 22:70,

71; Mark 14:61-64), all the Senators were filled with horror at what they regarded as blasphemy, and at once voted him guilty of that crime which was punishable by death. They felt the same way when Stephen spoke of Jesus as sitting at God's right hand, his associate in divine authority and power. **And rushed upon him with one accord.** "Stephen's death was a murder in which Sanhedrin, elders, and people became a brutal mob." — Prof. Thomas M. Lindsay.

58. **And they cast him out of the city.** The law of Moses (Lev. 24:14) required that executions by stoning should take place outside the camp; and when the Israelites came to live in cities, this was held to mean outside the city walls. Thus Christ was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem. **And stoned him.** This, the characteristic Jewish mode of execution, was at least more merciful than the Roman crucifixion which Christ endured. There is no reference to the Roman authorities, and evidently they were lax at this time, and left such



From a photograph by Bonfils.
St. Stephen's Gate, Jerusalem.

matters for the Jews to dispose of. "There was a place set apart for such punishment. The person to be stoned was placed on an elevation twice the height of a man, from whence with his hands bound he was thrown down, and then a stone as much as two men could carry was rolled down upon him by the witnesses, after which all the people present cast stones upon him." — *Cambridge Bible*. **And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.** The law required at least two witnesses who would testify to personal knowledge of the guilt of the accused, and the knowledge that they themselves must start the stoning (Deut. 17:7)

59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

would make the witnesses cautious in their testimony. The garments laid aside were the long outer robes, of which the witnesses divested themselves that their arms might be free to accomplish their awful task. Saul was probably delegated by the Sanhedrin to oversee the execution (see Acts 22 : 20), and was watching to make sure that the requirements of the Hebrew law were observed, his soul filled with satisfaction that a blasphemer was to meet a merited death, and the impious heresy of Christianity, as he hoped, thus permanently checked. How little did Saul foresee the future !

59. **And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord.** In that mortal crisis, a man would invoke no one less than God himself ; and thus Stephen made it plain that he held Jesus to be God. **And saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.** Perhaps Stephen had heard Jesus on the cross, when about to die, cry, " Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Now he addresses the same cry to Christ himself.

60. **And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.** Thus (Luke 23 : 46) Christ cried " with a loud voice " just before he



Martyrdom of St. Stephen.

Fra Angelico.

Fresco in Chapel of Niccolo V., Vatican, Rome.

died ; and thus also Christ on the cross prayed the Father to forgive his torturers, " for they know not what they do " (Luke 23 : 34). Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, records a similar prayer as made by James the apostle during his martyrdom. **And when he had said this he fell asleep.** " A peculiarly effective ending (especially in the original) to this scene of storm and stress. The phrase is highly characteristic of the Christian idea of death (see Matt. 27 : 52 ; John 11 : 11 f. ; Acts 13 : 36 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 13-15)." — *Prof. J. Vernon Barillet.*

CHRISTIAN HEROISM. " Stephen's death powerfully affected Paul. That light on the martyr's face ; that evident glimpse into the unseen Holy ; those words ; that patience and forgiveness — he could never forget them. Not only did he mould his own great speeches on the model of that never-to-be-forgotten address ; not only did those conceptions of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom affect his whole after-teaching and ministry ; but the very light that radiated from that strong, sweet, noble character seemed to have been absorbed by his spirit. It is thus that the martyr church has ever overcome by the word of her testimony, because the saints have loved not their lives even unto death." — *F. B. Meyer.*

" We need never fear about the future of the church. Though God's servants pass away till our hearts are saddened, and we fear that we shall never see their places filled, God will fill them in his own time and way. Joshua shall follow Moses. Elisha shall wear the mantle of Elijah. Paul shall take the place of Stephen, and to

ACTS 8: 1. And Saul was consenting unto his death.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles.

2. And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him.

3. But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.

the world's end every generation shall have its own witnesses, for God and his truth, in men and women filled with faith and power." — *Rev. Alfred Rowland, D.D.*

"*Nomina debita*, says John Donne; that is to say, 'Every man owes to the world the signification of his name, and of all his name. Every new addition of honor or of office lays a new obligation upon him, and his Christian name above all.' Now, when you name a man a deacon, as the apostles named Stephen, from the day you do so he begins to owe to the world and to the church some new obligations." — *Alexander Whyte*.

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in his train?
Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in his train.

"The martyr first, whose eagle eye
Could pierce beyond the grave,
Who saw his Master in the sky,
And called on him to save:
Like him, with pardon on his tongue
In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the wrong:
Who follows in his train?"

— *Bishop Reginald Heber*.

II. SAUL THE PERSECUTOR, Acts 8: 1-3; 22: 3, 4, 19, 20; 26: 4, 5, 9-11; Gal. 1: 13, 14. SAUL IN THE SANHEDRIN. "At a young man's feet." The expression is vague, but there is good reason to believe that Saul was now not less than thirty years old. The reverence for age, strong among all Orientals, was specially strong among the Jews, and they never entrusted authority to those who had not attained to full years of discretion. We may regard it as certain that even a scholar of Gamaliel, so full of genius and of zeal as Saul, would not have been appointed a commissioner of the Sanhedrin to carry out a responsible inquisition earlier than the age of thirty; and if we attach a literal meaning to the expression, 'When they were being condemned to death, I gave a vote against them' (Acts 26: 10), this implies that Paul was a member of the Sanhedrin. If so, he was at this time, by the very condition of that dignity, a married man. But if the regulation that a Sanhedrist must be a married man was intended to secure the spirit of gentleness, the rule had failed of its purpose in the case of Saul." — *F. W. Farrar*.

SAUL'S MISTAKEN ZEAL. Acts 8: 1. And Saul was consenting unto his death. Not that the stoning required Saul's consent; but he countenanced the awful deed, gave it his approval and aid, — and his vote also, probably, as a member of the Sanhedrin. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem. This was the large body of Christians in Jerusalem, including the few disciples at Christ's death, perhaps only a few hundred in number, augmented by the three thousand won at Pentecost and by the many added by preaching and conversation since that time. And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. Christ had foretold this dispersion, Acts 1: 8. "All" is not to be taken literally, for Saul (verse 3) still found many on whom to vent his rage; but all the leaders were scattered abroad, except the apostles, who boldly remained in Jerusalem to encourage those that for various reasons, such as sickness, age, or ties not to be abandoned, were compelled to stay in Jerusalem. Besides, the apostles must maintain headquarters for the Christian faith and preaching. The breadth of spirit already inculcated by Christianity is shown in this, that the dispersed Christians took refuge among the Samaritans whom they had formerly so heartily despised and hated; but Christ had taught them otherwise.

2. And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. It is not said that these "devout men" were Christians, but surely no one else would have dared to give burial to one whom the Jewish mob had stoned to death with so many tokens of hatred and abhorrence. Nor was the burial secret, but was accompanied with all outward signs of grief, as befitted the first martyr of the Christian church. "Lamentation" means literally in the Greek "beating the breast."

ACTS 22 : 19. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee :

20. And when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him.

3. But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison. There were too many to bring into court at once, so that most of them were committed to the foul Eastern prisons pending trial. Note the words expressive of Saul's rage and thoroughness : "laid waste" (a word in the Greek used of the ravages of wild beasts), "every house," "dragging," "men and women." The devil of bigotry had full possession of Saul.

SAUL'S CRUELTY, Acts 22 : 3, 4. When Saul, many years later, after long missionary toils as a Christian apostle, was arrested because of the raging against him in Jerusalem of just such a furious mob as he himself must often have stirred up, he addressed the mob from the stairs of Castle Antonia, being guarded by Roman soldiers. At the opening of his address, as one of the most convincing arguments he could have used, he related his own experience as a bitter enemy of Christians. He had persecuted "this Way," the people who had chosen Christ's way of life. He had loaded the Christians with chains, women as well as men. He had not been satisfied to throw them into the dark and noisome dungeons, but had been content with nothing less than their death. But even while raging the most fiercely against the Christians, he had been marvellously converted to the truth and had become one of them. Paul's own account of the appearance of Jesus to him in the great light on the Damascus road is most vivid and convincing.

19. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. This is a bit out of Paul's message from Jesus which he received in vision after he had gone to Jerusalem as a Christian, and fell into a trance while praying in the temple. Three years had elapsed since his conversion, the time being spent chiefly in study and meditation in Arabia. The synagogues were often used as courts to hear cases, and were even made the scene of the infliction of punishments.

20. And when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. "Witness" is "martyr" in the Greek, but the word had not yet passed over to mean bearing witness in death. Stephen's heroic death contributed to give it this meaning.

IS CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE? Acts 26 : 4, 5, 9-11; Gal. 1 : 13, 14. Some scholars have held that the sight of Stephen's heroic martyrdom aroused Saul's conscience, and that to drown its appeals he plunged into a frenzy of persecuting cruelty. Christ's words to Saul on the Damascus road, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," are quoted in support of this belief. "But we may say that there is no evidence forthcoming to show that Paul felt any of the compunctions, the misgivings, the hesitations, which are so freely attributed to him. Nay, we think there is proof to the contrary. 'It is hard for thee to kick against the goad' need mean no more than that his opposition to the Christian cause would be of no avail : as vain for him to persecute the Christians as it was for the oxen to kick against the goad. So far was he from feeling compunction, that he afterwards reckoned that he was forgiven for persecuting, because he 'did it ignorantly in unbelief.' — Prof. James Iverach.

Said Paul in his defence before King Agrippa (Acts 26 : 9), "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." His was a case of a false conscience, not of disobedience to conscience. Conscience is a safe guide only when it is divinely directed. "We never do evil so thoroughly and heartily as when led to it by an honest but perverted conscience." — *Edwards*. A perverted conscience is like a sun-dial overthrown and shattered. It is like the great steamer which was driven straight toward the rocks because a single nail, driven near the compass by a carpenter and not removed, had deflected its needle. A well-instructed conscience is the voice of God directing our lives ; but let us see to it that our conscience is really the voice of God, that it is taught by the Word of God and kept sensitive by prayer. Then only shall we avoid the terrible error into which Saul strayed.

LESSON III. — July 15.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL. — Acts 9:1-19 a; 22:6-16; 1 Corinthians 15:8.

PRINT Acts 22:6-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* — 1 TIM. 1:15.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 119:41-48.

Primary Topic : SAUL BECOMES A CHRISTIAN.

Lesson Material : Acts 9:1-19 a; 22:6-16. Print 22:6-16.

Memory Verse : Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.
Acts 16:31.

Junior Topic : SAUL BECOMES A CHRISTIAN.

Lesson Material : Acts 9:1-19 a; 22:6-16. Print 22:6-16.

Memory Verse : Acts 16:31.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW SAUL BECAME A CHRISTIAN.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE CONVERSION OF A PHARISEE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will rejoice in this lesson, so full of action and of heroic meaning. Draw a large outline map showing Saul's route from Jerusalem to Damascus. Fasten upon it strips of paper each bearing a question on the lesson, the questions relating to Saul's persecutions in Jerusalem and his commission from the Sanhedrin being placed in a circle around Jerusalem, those concerning his journey being placed along the route, those about the appearance of Jesus to Saul being placed in a circle south of Damascus, and those regarding Saul's experiences in Damascus being placed in a circle around that city. The pupils will remove the questions in turn and answer them.

The Older Classes will use this lesson for a careful discussion of conversion: what it is, why it is needed, what various experiences accompany it, how it proves itself real, how more conversions may be obtained in your church, and so on. Some skilled evangelist may be present to answer questions and give some of his experiences in winning souls.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
What changes would be brought about in our town if all its inhabitants were soundly converted?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Francis E. Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul*.
Pounder's *St. Paul and His Cities*. Smith's *The Life*

and Letters of St. Paul. Chapman's *The Surrendered Life*. Drummond's *The Changed Life*. Austin Phelps's *The New Birth*. Campbell's *Life's Highest Loyalty*. Condé's *The Human Element in the Making of a Christian*. *A Challenge to Life Service*, by Harris and Robbins.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Saul's conversion, A.D. 36.

Place. — Damascus, in Syria, about 140 miles north of Jerusalem.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Travel in Saul's day.

Visions in Saul's life.

The character of Ananias.

Indications in the New Testament of Saul's eye trouble.

New Testament teachings in regard to conversion.

New Testament instances of conversion.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How Saul Became a Christian.

I. THE GREAT LIGHT, Acts 9:1-7;
22:6-10; 1 Cor. 15:8.

The commission.

The journey.

The arrest.

The vision of Jesus Christ.

II. SAUL'S NEW COMMISSION, Acts 9:
8-19 a; 22:11-16.

The vision of Ananias.

Saul's eyes opened.

"Thou shalt be a witness for him."

What is conversion?

I. THE GREAT LIGHT, Acts 9:1-7; 22:6-10; 1 Cor. 15:8. SAUL'S COMMISSION. "After he had purged the Holy City and her environs of the heretical pollution Saul's zeal remained unabated. He 'still breathed out threat and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord.' Tidings reached him that some of the fugitives had found an asylum in the old Syrian capital, the far northern city of Damascus;

6. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Dā-mās'-cūs, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

and he resolved to pursue them thither. They were indeed beyond the confines of Palestine, but they were not beyond the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin, since every Jewish community throughout the Empire was subject in matters of religion to the local synagogue, which in turn owed allegiance to the supreme court at Jerusalem. So he obtained from Caiaphas the high priest, as president of the Sanhedrin, *lettres de cachet* to the synagogues of Damascus, empowering him to arrest 'any that were of the Way, whether men or women,' and convey them in bonds to Jerusalem for trial and sentence." — *Prof. David Smith*.

THE JOURNEY. Saul might have journeyed through Samaria, crossing the Jordan by the ford of Bethshean, or, more likely, he crossed the Jordan near Jericho by the ford of Bethany, and then went north along the east bank of the Jordan. It was a journey of about one hundred and forty miles, and he seems to have made it on foot; it would occupy more than a week, and if the glorious martyr death of Stephen had at all stirred his conscience, that journey would give him much time for uneasy meditation. He must have pressed on eagerly, that fresh and fierce action might silence the inner voice of God, which probably he regarded as Satan's temptation to slackness in the sacred cause on which he had embarked.

SAUL ARRESTED IN HIS COURSE, Acts 22:6. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus. "Tradition, ever anxious to

fix the exact site of every great event in history, tells us that the awful vision which struck Paul blind, but at the same time opened his spiritual eyes, came to him at the spot now called Es-Salehiyeh, where the umbrageous gardens of the magnificent city of Damascus first break upon eyes that have been tortured by sterile mountains and thirsty plains, and half blinded by the overpowering Syrian sun. This view has always been famous and always will be, for no one can ride for days across this arid country and suddenly come upon one of the most beautiful oases in the world, smiling with brilliant flowers and luscious fruits, while gurgling streams of pure fresh water run through it in every direction, without being deeply moved. Many other traditions cluster around this spot. Abraham is said to have rested here for the last time before entering the Promised Land. Here came Mohammed, and, looking down upon the beautiful oasis and the magnificent city, then as now one of the oldest cities in the world, he is said to have exclaimed: 'I will go no farther; there can be but one Paradise for man, and mine shall be beyond the grave.' — *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D.* About noon. It was (and is) customary for travellers in that hot climate to rest at noon and not to resume their journey till the declining sun mitigated the terrific heat; but Saul, in his impetuous zeal, was pressing on, in great haste to get at his wicked task. Suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. The light was dazzling and (literally) blinding. It was brighter even than the fierce light of the Syrian sun at midday, as Saul testified before King Agrippa, Acts 26:13. It was the great light of deity, which in ancient days glowed above the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, and which was manifest in many crucial events during Bible times.



General View of Damascus.

7. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8. And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Dă-măs'-cūs; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

7. **And I fell unto the ground.** Saul's companions (Acts 26 : 14) fell to the ground with him, all being utterly prostrated with terror by that noiseless explosion of awful



Saul's Conversion.

Julius von Schnorr.

light. **And heard a voice saying unto me.** We are not told definitely that Saul had not met Jesus in the flesh and heard him speak, but this is clearly implied in the narrative. It is supposed that during the three years of Christ's public ministry Saul, having finished his theological training, had returned to Tarsus and there served as a rabbi, afterwards going back to Jerusalem and becoming a member of the Sanhedrin and active in the persecution of the Christians. If he had met Jesus during his life on earth, Saul's career up to this point might have been entirely different. **Saul, Saul, why**

persecutest thou me? The Hebrew form of Saul's name, Saoul, is here used, showing that we here have Christ's exact words, as related to Luke by Paul himself. Another evidence of this is the doubling of the name, which seems to have been characteristic of our Lord, as in "Simon, Simon" (Luke 22 : 31) and "Martha, Martha" (Luke 10 : 41).

8. **And I answered, Who art thou, Lord?** Here is another evidence that Saul had not seen Jesus in the flesh, for if he had, he would have recognized him in his glorified body. By addressing Jesus as "Lord" Saul expressed his sense of the majesty of the being he saw before him, his supernatural nature, perhaps his deity; but he did not know him to be Jesus. **And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.** With these words Saul's house of bigotry and hatred tumbled about his head. They meant the beginning of a reconstruction in all his ideas, his entire life. Jesus the carpenter, from the despised village of Nazareth, stood before him arrayed in the majestic splendor of deity. And he had been persecuted in the persons of his hunted followers. Was ever a more revolutionary disclosure made to mortal man?

9. **And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.** In Acts 9 : 7 it is said that Saul's companions heard the voice, but "voice" is not in the same case as here, a distinction in the Greek that cannot be imitated in the English. Saul's companions heard a sound, but not articulate words; Saul distinguished the words.

10. **And I said, What shall I do, Lord?** This question is most characteristic of Saul the energetic. As soon as his terrible mistake was made evident, he wanted to set about correcting it. As soon as the true way of life was presented to him, he was

11. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Dă-măs'-cüs.

ready to set out upon it. And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus. There, in the great city where Saul intended to work against Christ, he was now to work for him. For the same reason, later he went to Jerusalem, that he might testify for Christ where he had so often spoken against him. This is what all converts will be eager to do. And there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. It was made clear to Saul from the hour of his conversion that his life was a part of the plan of God, that his new Master had a definite work for him to perform, one that no one else could do so well. Every Christian should know this same thing to be true of himself.

THE VISION OF JESUS CHRIST. Every one of us may have a vision of Jesus Christ which is just as real, just as powerful, just as beautiful and blessed, as that which Saul saw on the Damascus road. It need not come with the same startling and supernatural accompaniments, but we shall be equally sure that we have seen him, and from that time we shall know him and follow him.

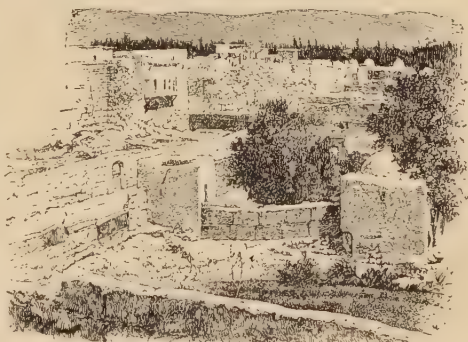
"There lived once a young girl whose perfect grace of character was the wonder of those who knew her. She wore on her neck a gold locket which no one was ever allowed to open. One day, in a moment of unusual confidence, one of her companions was allowed to touch its spring and learn its secret. She saw written these words: '*Whom having not seen, I love.*' That was the secret of her beautiful life. . . .

"Make Christ your most constant companion — this is what it practically means for us. Be more under his influence than under any other influence. Ten minutes spent in his society every day, aye, two minutes if it be face to face and heart to heart, will make the whole day different. Every character has an inward spring; let Christ be it. Every action has a key-note; let Christ set it." — *Henry Drummond*.

"Obedience to the call of Christ means to-day, as it always has meant, the foregoing of earth's prizes. There is no call that meets from the heart of youth such a swift and hearty response as the call to the heroic. Addressing his fellow countrymen, Garibaldi said, 'I offer you hardships, poverty, wounds, and rags; but whoever among you loves Italy, let him follow me'; and the flower of Italian youth sprang to his side to fight under the banner of freedom. It is upon this high ground that the church of to-day must stand in her appeal to the young people, asking them to devote themselves to the service of humanity in the name of Christ." — *Rev. James M. Campbell, D.D.*

II. SAUL'S NEW COMMISSION, Acts 9:8-19a; 22:11-16. THE VISION OF ANANIAS. 11. And when I could not see for the glory of that light. The blindness which then came upon Saul, though the full calamity was supernaturally removed

three days later, caused seemingly a weakness of the eyes which remained with Saul throughout his life, and which many believe to have been the "thorn in the flesh" of which he wrote. Thus his indistinct vision caused him to fail to identify the high priest (Acts 23:5), and made it necessary for him to dictate his epistles to an amanuensis, and, when he signed them, to sign with "large letters." Being led by the hand of them that were with me. An indication that he had made the journey on foot; for if he had been riding he would have been placed on the animal he had been using, which his companions would have led. Reduced in a moment to this helplessness, the proud Saul was led into the city where he had expected to domineer. Thus man's pride must be brought low before he will bow beneath the scepter of the King of kings and take upon himself the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light. I came into Damascus. "The beauty of Damascus, situated between barren moun-



Damascus. From a photograph.
The House of Naaman the Leper.

12. And one Ān-ā-nī'-ās, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there,

13. Came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him.

tains and the desert, has been sung by many a poet. The Barada breaks through the Anti-Libanus range, and, dividing itself up into several branches, two of which were the Abana and Pharpar mentioned in the Old Testament, transforms a district thirty miles in diameter into a scene of fertile beauty before it runs itself dry in the desert. The sterility of the desert and the barrenness of the mountains lend the additional charm of contrast to this country of waving trees and refreshing verdure, in the midst of which lies Damascus, one of the most ancient cities mentioned in the Bible. The city on the border of the desert is forever associated with the story of the Israelitish maid who was instrumental in bringing about the cure of the Syrian warrior, Naaman, who was afflicted with leprosy. During the time that Antony had control of the East he gave this territory to Cleopatra, and the Damascenes had an opportunity of wondering at the 'Serpent of old Nile.' At the time of Saul's conversion the city was seized by Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea, who was at war with Herod Antipas. Herod married the daughter of this king, but had repudiated her for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, as is related in the Gospel story." — *R. W. Pounder*. This ancient city suffered many bombardments at the hands of the French, in execution of their mandate over this region, and was in great part reduced to ruins and its beauty destroyed.

12. **And one Ananias.** It is well to have this name redeemed, and it is a pity that when we think of it we remember the liar of the early church (Acts 5: 1-6), rather than this good man who helped Saul. Damascus also redeemed the name of Judas, for Saul had taken lodgings in the house of a good man of that name (Acts 9: 11). **A devout man according to the law.** He was a disciple of Christ (Acts 9: 10), perhaps one who had come from Jerusalem, though probably before Saul's persecution; but he remained a true Jew, faithful to the law of Moses, as were all the Christians. **Well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there.** Though a Christian, he was honored by the Jews of Damascus, among whom there had not yet been time

for such hostility to Christianity to grow up as had developed in Jerusalem, fomented by the Sanhedrin and the other Jewish leaders.

13. **Came unto me.** In Acts 9: 10-16 Luke tells us, having his information from Saul, how a vision of Christ came to this Ananias, bidding him go into the street called Straight, a long, straight street which down to our own day ran through Damascus, being the principal thoroughfare of the city. He was to ask in the house of Judas for Saul of Tarsus, who was blind, who had been much in prayer, and who had had a vision of Ananias coming and restoring his sight by placing hands upon him. But Ananias was terrified at the very name of Saul, of whose persecuting errand to Damascus he had heard, and protested against the errand. The Lord, however, reassured him by telling him that this very Saul had been chosen by him to carry his name before Jews and Gentiles and even into royal courts, and that he who had caused so many



From a photograph by Wilson.
Street Called Straight, Damascus.

Christians to suffer would himself suffer many things for the name of Christ. Therefore Ananias obtained sufficient courage to seek out the dread messenger of the hostile Sanhedrin. **And standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight.** Ananias was evidently moved by the sight of the blind man, for Saul was probably

14. And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth.

15. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

16. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

pale and worn, for he had not taken food for three days. His heart went out to him, and his fear instantly vanished. Laying his hands on him, as Saul in his vision had seen him doing, and calling him "Brother," Ananias told him of the message that had come to him from the Lord (Acts 9:17). **And in that very hour I looked up on him.** Scales fell from his eyes, as Dr. Luke tells us in his account (Acts 9:18), using medical terms common in that day. It was a miraculous cure, for it was sudden, not gradual as a natural recovery would have been.

14. **And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will.** Ananias derived this from the Lord's statement to him that Saul was "a chosen vessel" (Acts 9:15). **And to see the Righteous One.** The knowledge of the great light on the Damascus road, and of the vision of Christ that had converted Saul, was evidently common property among the Christians of the city, and perhaps also among the Jews; compare Acts 9:17, "who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest." Jesus is most fittingly called "the Righteous One," for he alone is perfectly righteous, and we may be righteous only as his righteousness is imparted to us. **And to hear a voice from his mouth.** Thus Saul not only saw but heard the Lord Jesus, "as one born out of due time" (1 Cor. 15:8).

15. **For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.** All of Christ's apostles were to be his witnesses of what they had seen and heard (Acts 1:8), and now Saul no less than they. Indeed, no more glorious witness ever gave testimony to the truth.

16. **And now why tarriest thou?** "According to the narrative in Acts 9:15 the message of Ananias had already proclaimed the gift of the Holy Spirit to Saul, and the favor of God had been shown in the recovery of his sight. So the question of Ananias becomes parallel to that of St. Peter in the house of Cornelius: 'Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' " — *Cambridge Bible*. **Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.** Saul was to be baptized because Christ had commanded the use of the sacred rite (Matt. 28:19, etc.) as a testimony before men of faith in Christ, and for the removal of sin through the faith in the name of Christ which baptism signified. Saul, like his Master, must "fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).

WHAT IS CONVERSION? The word "conversion" means, literally, a complete turning. Christian conversion is a turning from sin to the Saviour, from opposition to Christ to entire surrender to him, from the service of Satan to the service of God, from a life dominated by the spirit of this world to a life dominated by the Holy Spirit of God. Conversion is perfectly illustrated in its essence by that of Saul, though the manner of conversion varies in different lives. In some it is a sudden change, like Saul's; in others a gradual transformation. In some it is dramatic and startling, like Saul's; in others it is quiet and gentle. The immediate agency of conversion differs likewise: it may be a vision, or a sermon, or a book, or a letter, or a conversation, or the warning of another life, or the noble example of another life, or some happening which seems to be quite casual. It may come in a revival, or in a Sunday-school class, or at home, or in school, or on the street, or in solitude. The Holy Spirit is not limited to one mode, but works diversely; but always back of every human instrumentality, conversion to Christ is his work. Ananias is only an instrument.

"The only way for us to receive the touch of the Holy Ghost so that he may reveal Christ to us is: (1) a willingness to forsake every known sin. If one sin is cherished, the blessing tarries. (2) A willingness to give up everything which may be revealed to us as the days go by. For we shall have more light to-morrow than to-day, and something may be questionable to-morrow that we could do with a clear conscience now. (3) A complete surrender, putting everything in his hands and yielding to him the right to control us in everything. (4) After this, simply to trust him to work in us and through us as it may please him." — *J. Wilbur Chapman*.

“The great plan of salvation is ceasing from making efforts to make yourself a righteous character, and sinking helpless into the arms of Christ and accepting full salvation, and a pure heart, and all the blessings of the new covenant by faith.”
— *General William Booth.*

LESSON IV. — July 22.

SAUL'S EARLY MINISTRY. — Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 19-30; 12: 25; Galatians 1: 15-18.

PRINT Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 25, 26.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God.* — ACTS 9: 20.

Devotional Reading : Rom. 12: 1-8.

Primary Topic : PAUL BEGINS TO WORK FOR JESUS.

Lesson Material : Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 19-30; 12: 25; Gal. 1: 15-18.

Print : Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 25, 26.

Memory Verse : He proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. Acts 9: 20 b.

Junior Topic : PAUL'S FIRST WORK FOR JESUS.

Lesson Material : Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 19-30; 12: 25; Gal. 1: 15-18.

Print : Acts 9: 19 b-30; 11: 25, 26.

Memory Verse : I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Rom. 1: 16.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : SAUL CHAMPIONS AN UNPOPULAR CAUSE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : YEARS OF GROWING EXPERIENCE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes may construct during the week a section of a “wall” made of pasteboard painted stone color, with a little house on it or against it, and the window through which a tiny image in a tiny basket may be lowered. A map may be used showing Saul's travels during the time covered by the lesson, with questions on the various events written on slips of paper and fastened along the route, to be used as described in last week's lesson.

The Older Classes will consider a number of important topics connected with practical Christian work, emphasizing the matter of association in that work. Ask what constitutes a Christian church and what its work should be, taking the church at Antioch as a model.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How can the Christians of this town co-operate better for good causes ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Saul in Arabia, A.D. 36-38. Paul's escape from Damascus, A.D. 38, followed by his visit to Jerusalem. Paul in Cilicia and Syria, A.D. 38-42. Paul called to Antioch, A.D. 43. Famine relief taken to Jerusalem, A.D. 45. Return of Saul to Antioch, A.D. 46.

Place. — Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Tarsus, Antioch of Syria.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Saul's energy.
Meditation in the Christian life.
Barnabas compared with Saul.
History of Antioch.
Character of Antioch.
Names applied to Christians in the New Testament.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Saul Begins His Work for Christ.

I. SAUL IN DAMASCUS AND ARABIA,
Acts 9: 19 b-25; Gal. 1: 15-18.

A prompt and bold beginning.
Three years of preparation.
A providential escape.
Starting out in Christian work.

II. SAUL IN ARABIA AND JERUSALEM,
Acts 9: 26-30.

The visit to Jerusalem.
Successful preaching.
Hostility aroused again.
Meeting opposition in Christian work.

III. SAUL AT WORK IN ANTIOCH, Acts 11: 19-30; 12: 25.

Saul in Tarsus.
The church in Antioch.
Barnabas sends for Saul.
Relief for the Jerusalem Christians.
Co-operation in Christian work.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. Smith's *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*. Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul*.

ACTS 9: 19 b. And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Dă-măs'-cūs.

20. And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God.

21. And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests.

22. But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Dă-măs'-cūs, proving that this is the Christ.

I. SAUL PREACHING IN DAMASCUS, Acts 9: 19 b-25. 19 b. And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus. "Certain days," when used elsewhere in the Acts, indicates plainly a short time, so that it probably has that significance here. After Ananias, through the power of the Holy Spirit, had restored Saul's vision, Saul received baptism first, and after he had fulfilled that great duty he broke his three-days fast, and his weakened body recovered strength which he immediately used for his new Master. He was evidently, on the testimony of Ananias, received at once and without fear by the Christians of Damascus, of whom there seems to have been a considerable number even in those early days.

20. **And straightway.** Here we meet the vigorous adverb found so often in Mark's Gospel. Saul had many excuses for procrastination which he might have urged: his slight knowledge of Christianity, his former activity as a persecutor which would lead men to suspect his present sincerity, his uncertainty as to his future course in life; but he was not looking for excuses, he was eagerly looking for opportunities, and every one that seeks opportunities for Christian work finds them at once, and many of them. **In the synagogues.** Christ constantly took advantage of the synagogue practice of inviting distinguished and able visitors to address the gathering, and Saul throughout his life, in all his extensive travels, began his work in the synagogue if the place where he was had a synagogue. In the synagogue and among the Jews he would find those who, by language, customs, training, history, and habits of thought would be the most likely to listen sympathetically to the gospel of the Jewish Messiah. Saul had brought letters to the synagogues of Damascus (Acts 9: 2), but he never delivered them; instead he brought them a totally different message! **He proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God.** The fact that in the humble carpenter of the despised Nazareth their long-expected Messiah had appeared as the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies was the most marvellous and glorious news that could come to the Jews — at least to those of them that believed it!

21. **And all that heard him were amazed.** They had expected a fierce denunciation of Jesus and his disciples; they now heard them exalted beyond measure, and the famous rabbi declaring that he himself was a follower of Jesus. No wonder they were amazed. **And said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name?** The men that had come with Saul to Damascus would spread the news of his past activity as a persecutor, even if it had not reached Damascus before. **And he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests.** Ananias knew of Saul's errand (Acts 9: 14), and probably by this time all the other Jews in Damascus.

22. **But Saul increased the more in strength.** The verb used in the Greek is the word that has been taken over in English in "dynamite." Saul, as he meditated on the Scriptures, and prayed more, and learned more about Christ from those who had seen him and heard him, became a very dynamo of spiritual power. No true Christian convert will stand still. Progress, growth, is the law of the new life which he has entered. **And confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.** Saul, the learned rabbi, was doubtless more familiar with the prophecies of the Messiah than any other person in Damascus. His proof of the Messiahship of Jesus consisted of a repetition of those prophecies, placing alongside each of them the facts in Christ's life which fulfilled it. The thought of this comparison is involved in the Greek word translated "proving."

THREE YEARS OF PREPARATION, Gal. 1: 15-18. The "many days" of Acts 9: 23, contrasted with the "certain days" of Acts 9: 19 indicates that here is where we must place Saul's sojourn of three years in Arabia, after which he returned again to Damascus, and the happenings of Acts 9: 23 took place. The passage from Gala-

23. And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him.

24. But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him:

25. But his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

tians contains all that is known about this stay in Arabia, nor is it even clear that all of the three years was spent there. We are not told to what part of the extensive region called Arabia Saul went. It reached from Damascus south to the Indian Ocean, and from the Red Sea eastward to the Persian Gulf. It is about 1,500 miles long, 800 miles broad, and its area is about 1,139,000 square miles, or more than a third that of continental United States.

"Why did Paul go to Arabia? Would it not have seemed likely that he would wish to go straight back to Jerusalem, or at least to Palestine, after his conversion? There he could find the apostles who had companied with Christ and the disciples who had heard him and had followed him from place to place. But he went away into Arabia. Arabia was a desert. He could not confer with flesh and blood there. He could commune with God and with his own soul. The soul of Paul craved solitude. He needed to face the problems which his new experience suddenly had thrust upon him. He must wrestle with them alone. In Arabia he prepared himself for his future ministry. He studied the Scriptures and waited upon God. He formulated his theology. He reasoned it all out. His system of thought was complete before he began to preach. Too many men go into the ministry to-day who are not clear upon many points of doctrine. Paul knew what he believed from the beginning to the end of his ministry." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes.*

ACT 9: 23. And when many days were fulfilled. These "many days," if the conjecture stated above is correct, included the years spent in Arabia. Luke's plan for the Acts, outlined in Acts 1: 8 and strictly followed, called for an account of the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and Gentile lands in that order, an order which mention of Arabia would have broken. **The Jews took counsel together to kill him.** At first they were stunned, "confounded," by the unexpectedness and vigor of Saul's proclamation of Jesus as the Son of God, and could not muster arguments to withstand him. But on his second appearance in Damascus they had recovered their confidence, they perceived that Saul's success meant their own loss of influence, and very likely commands had come from the Sanhedrin that Saul was to be put down at all costs. At any rate, they were of the same mind as the murderous Jews of Jerusalem who had cried before Pilate, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

24. **But their plot became known to Saul.** Many of these Jews by this time had relatives and friends who were Christians. It would be difficult to hide the plot from them, and they would at once warn Saul. **And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him.** They dogged Saul's footsteps, seeking an opportunity to spring out upon him from some dark doorway, and they kept up a systematic watch at the city gates, to slay him if he tried to leave the city. In 2 Cor. 11: 32 Paul himself tells us that "the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes" in order to take him, a statement which indicates that Aretas, the king of Arabia Petraea, had at this time managed to seize Damascus, which had belonged to his ancestors, and that the Jews were numerous and influential enough in Damascus to obtain his aid against Saul and the Christians.

25. **But his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall.** "His disciples" shows that on this second visit to Damascus Saul had remained long enough to win a number of followers to Christ. In 2 Cor. 11: 33 Saul himself says that he was let down through a window. At least one house in Damascus was built so that it overhung the city wall, and therefore Saul might easily be let down the wall through a window of the house, or else the house was built against the wall, which was pierced by a window for the dwelling. The same device was used by Rahab in saving the spies, Josh. 2: 15, and by Michal in saving David, 1 Sam. 19: 12. **Lowering him in a basket.** "The basket here mentioned (*spuris*) is the same that is spoken of (Matt. 15: 37) at the feeding of the four thousand in the mountain district west of the Sea of Galilee. It appears to have been large and soft, fit for carrying a large quantity of miscellaneous articles from the plain into the hills, while

26. And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

the baskets (*cophinoi*) spoken of at the feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14 : 20) were such as the multitude, which in that case had followed Jesus on foot out of the cities, would be likely to carry in their hands. In a basket of the former kind Saul might easily be wrapped and then lowered over the city wall." — *Cambridge Bible*.

STARTING OUT IN CHRISTIAN WORK. Saul's initial experiences in his Christian life afford many lessons for the beginner in the ways of Christ to-day. Not all, of course — comparatively few — meet with the dramatic elements of Saul's experiences, but the essential elements may be the blessed lot of all. These are :

1. A vision of Jesus as a living, loving, powerful Saviour, invested with all the glory of the infinite Father, acquainted with all our human needs, proving his love by the perfect sacrifice of Calvary — such a vision as wins and holds.

2. The prompt surrender of all our heart and life to Jesus, so that thenceforth for us to live is Christ, all our affections, hopes, and plans having him for their vital and happy center.

3. The instant and complete doing of Christ's will as it is revealed to us, making it our own glad will, no matter how it transforms our life.

4. The careful preparation for Christian service, including the patient grounding in Christian truth and wise selection and adoption of the best Christian methods of work.

5. Union with Christ's other followers in a close covenant of fellowship and service, the study of God's Word together, the ordinances and work of Christ's church.

These five elements of Saul's early Christian life may be ours in their fulness, and thus we may set out upon a career which will be no less apostolic than his, and no less blest of the Master.

II. SAUL IN JERUSALEM, Acts 9 : 26-30. **THE VISIT TO JERUSALEM,** Acts 9 : 26. We must remember that, as the Jews reckoned, the three years which elapsed between Saul's conversion and his visit to Jerusalem need have been no more than one complete year and parts of the preceding and following years. During this time, we may be sure, Saul's heart turned often to Jerusalem; but he well knew the difficulties and dangers that would meet him there, and he would not go till he was well grounded in his Christian convictions, and had thoroughly tested his Christian weapons. **He assayed to join himself to the disciples.** No successful worker for Christ is a solitary and independent worker. Probably no one ever lived who was better equipped in heart and mind than Saul to carry on a great religious work alone, but throughout his life he associated many other Christian workers closely with himself, and the list of his friends and co-workers in the New Testament is excelled only by those of Christ. Saul did not seek out his old companions in the Sanhedrin, for he knew well their unyielding bigotry, and what fierce hostility they would show to any convert to Christianity, especially to one whom they would regard as a conspicuous renegade. **And they were all afraid of him, not believing that he**



Paul Let Down in a Basket.

27. But Bär'-nă-bās took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Dă-măs'-cūs he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.

28. And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem,

29. Preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews; but they were seeking to kill him.

30. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Çæs-ă-rē'-ă, and sent him forth to Tär'-sūs.

was a disciple. Saul went to Jerusalem primarily to see Peter (Gal. 1: 18), the leading apostle, the close intimate of Jesus Christ, longing to gain from him some fuller knowledge of the Messiah. He and Peter had much in common — their decisiveness of character, their courage, their frankness, their ardent love of Christ, and their unflinching zeal in his service. But even Peter, it seems, was afraid to enter into comradeship with the old-time persecutor, who had wrought so much evil in the lives of the Christians. The Jerusalem disciples may have heard rumors of Saul's doings in far-off Damascus, but they were only the chance words of travellers. Who could be sure that Saul's friendliness was not all a trick to discover the Christians more thoroughly, so that he might destroy them utterly?

27. **But Barnabas took him.** "Barnabas" means "Son of Consolation," an appropriate name for this kindly and generous man. His other name was Joseph. He belonged to the tribe of Levi, whose hereditary privilege and duty it was to care for the temple, but he was born in the island of Cyprus. Luke has already introduced him in his narrative (Acts 4: 36, 37) as having made a conspicuously large gift to the church in Jerusalem at the very outset. Cyprus is not far from Cilicia, and Barnabas may have studied in the famous schools of Tarsus, and have known Saul personally in his youth. At any rate, he was a man of large and liberal spirit, with wide connections, and was better informed regarding Saul than the other Christians of Jerusalem. **And brought him to the apostles.** We can hardly suppose that all twelve of the apostles were in Jerusalem; Saul tells us that he conversed only with Peter and with James the Lord's brother (Gal. 1: 18, 19). His stay in Jerusalem was cut short abruptly. **And declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him.** This was the essential fact in Saul's life; everything else sprang from that. Any clear vision of Christ and converse with him becomes at once the central fact in any life. **And how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.** This sounds as if Barnabas had personal knowledge of Saul's work in Damascus.

28. **And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem.** "Going in and going out" is the Hebrew way of saying that his association with the Christians was intimate and continual. He was in Jerusalem only fifteen days (Gal. 1: 18), though this expression would seem to imply a longer time.

29. **Preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.** Bold preaching was characteristic of Saul throughout his life. The truth, to his mind, was not something to hide under a bushel, but to put on a lampstand, that it might give light to all the house. **And he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews.** Saul, though a Hebrew of the Hebrews, was a Greek-speaking Jew, and, in his evangelistic work, would naturally seek first the synagogue of the Cilician Jews, those from his home province of Asia Minor. He would be most at home there; it was his old church. But what he had to tell these Grecian Jews about Jesus Christ aroused their prompt antagonism, which Saul had to meet with facts and arguments. He was well prepared for the conflict. **But they were seeking to kill him.** Saul would remember how Stephen, the eloquent and ardent Christian advocate, had spoken for Christ in these same Greek-speaking synagogues (Acts 6: 8-14), and had so angered the Jews there by his powerful and over-mastering presentation of the cause of Christ that they brought about his death, Saul himself being among their leaders in the wicked work. Now he was in Stephen's place, and rejoiced to be.

30. **And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea.** It would be as difficult to keep such a plot secret in Jerusalem as it had been in Damascus, for the Christian population was as yet closely intertwined with the non-Christian. "The brethren" is a reminiscence of the time when the very word "Christian"

had not yet been coined. Cæsarea was a city on the Mediterranean coast northwest of Jerusalem; it was the Roman capital of Palestine. Saul was later to spend two years there, confined in a Roman prison. It may well be that Saul was reluctant to leave Jerusalem after so short a stay, and desired to prolong his work there in spite of the imminent danger; but he had a vision of Jesus commanding him to leave (Acts 22: 17-21) and to labor far away in Gentile regions. That vision he was prompt to obey. **And sent him forth to Tarsus.** Saul might have travelled northward by land, for there was a well-used road along the coast, but "the fact that his friends brought Saul down to Cæsarea, the only city of southern Palestine which had a good harbor, indicates that he was to make the journey to Tarsus by water." — *Bible for Home and School.* It was natural that Saul, driven from Jerusalem, which had been his second home, should return to his boyhood home. There, he knew, far from the Sanhedrin, he would be freer to preach the great truths of Christianity.

MEETING OPPOSITION IN CHRISTIAN WORK. The Christian must expect opposition. He is not of the world, and he cannot expect the world to favor him. "Woe unto you," said Christ, "when all men speak well of you!" Opposition is the world's testimony to the reality of our faith and the vigor of our Christian testimony and service. When we are opposed for this reason, we are never opposed alone. Christ is with us and our enemies are his. Standing with the omnipotent Ruler of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, what or whom should we fear? and can we have any doubt as to our final triumph? "I can do all things," said Paul — and we may say it with him — "through Christ who strengthens me."

III. SAUL AT WORK IN ANTIOCH, Acts 11: 19-30; 12: 25. SAUL IN TARUS. "Tarsus was his home, yet it was inevitable that he should be ill received by his former associates, his kinsfolk, and especially his father, that stern old Pharisee. He would seem in the eyes of his father a traitor to the ancestral faith, and would be greeted with a storm of reproaches. It would be a painful encounter. It issued in irremediable estrangement, and the bitter memory remained with him to the last. Nevertheless he did not flinch. An outcast from home and kindred, he devoted himself to the service of the gospel in his native city and the surrounding province of Syria-Cilicia; and he achieved no small success. The fame of his ministry travelled as far as the province of Judæa, and excited wonder and gladness in the churches there." — *Prof. David Smith.*

THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH. During the dispersion of the Jerusalem Christians because of Saul's persecution they went as far as Phœnicia (the country along the coast northwest of Palestine), Cyprus (the large island west of Phœnicia), and Antioch. The last name introduces us to the city which became, through Paul's activities, the great missionary center of Christianity during his lifetime.

Antioch was the metropolis of Syria, situated at the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. It was founded about 300 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator, who named it after his father, Antiochus. The seaport of Antioch was Seleucia, named from the founder of Antioch, with which Antioch was connected by sixteen miles of the navigable River Orontes. Only dilapidated ruins indicate the grandeur of ancient Antioch, and the modern town, bearing the ancient name (*Anakiyeh*), is a miserable village with a few thousand inhabitants.

"In St. Paul's time Antioch contained five hundred thousand people, and was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. The seaport of Seleucia was a mighty fortress, comparable to Gibraltar or Sebastopol. A splendid road as well as a navigable river connected the port with the great city. As though the river and the



Antioch in Syria.

ACTS 11: 25. And he went forth to Tär'-süs to seek for Saul;

26. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Än'-tj-öeh. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Än'-tj-öeh.

road were not sufficient for the commerce of Antioch, a huge canal was cut from Seleucia to the capital through masses of solid rock. This was one of the greatest engineering feats of antiquity. Moreover the protecting breakwaters, and the great dock cut out of the solid rock at Seleucia, made the harbor the most famous in the world.

"A splendid corso with double colonnades of marble ran for five miles in a straight line through the very heart of Antioch. In wet weather people could walk from end to end under cover. Mount Silpius, which overlooked the city, was hewn into one vast statue of Charon, the infernal ferryman. The wall of Antioch was in some places fifty or sixty feet high, surmounted by a hundred huge towers, while on the top of the wall it is said that two chariots could drive abreast. 'So infamous was the grove of Daphne, five miles out of the city, filled with shrines to Apollo, Venus, Isis, etc., and crowded with theaters, baths, taverns, and dancing saloons, that sailors detected there were punished and dismissed from the imperial service. Daphnic morals became a proverb.' " — *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D.*

This great and wicked city is renowned in Christian history as the scene of a notable forward step in Christianity; for at the dispersion from Jerusalem some Greek-speaking Jews reached Antioch. They were natives of Cyprus and of Cyrene in northern Africa, who on the way thither had preached Christ only to Jews; but on reaching Antioch they took the great step of preaching Christ to the Greeks also, a large number of whom became Christians though quite unacquainted with Judaism. When the Jerusalem Christians heard of this they were much disturbed, for heretofore only Jews had entered the Christian church, and sent that good man, Barnabas, to inquire into the matter. No better commissioner could have been selected, for he was not only a Greek-speaking Jew, but a man of large and liberal spirit. When he saw how the grace of God was working in Antioch, he rejoiced, bidding the Greek Christians to cleave to the Lord "with purpose of heart," and under his ministry the Christian church in Antioch grew mightily and prospered.

BARNABAS SENDS FOR SAUL. ACTS 11: 25. **And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul.** Barnabas had been so successful in winning souls to Christ that he needed some one to help care for the new Christians, instruct them and guide them. Besides, the opportunities were coming in greater numbers than he could meet by himself. There was no one to whom he could turn more hopefully than the energetic and eloquent Saul, who had been gaining so many converts in near-by Tarsus.

26. **And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch.** Very likely Barnabas knew that he might be overshadowed by this former rabbi and member of the Sanhedrin, whose history had been so striking and who had such a story to tell; but what cared he? And what does any true Christian worker care for personal glory and precedence, if only the Lord's work gets better done? **And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people.** The strange expression, "were gathered together with the church," may mean that the church work brought Barnabas and Saul together in one of the most profitable Christian partnerships of all time; or it may mean that they and the church members labored together in fruitful harmony. Both explanations would be true. **And that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.** This is the second great contribution of Antioch to Christianity, — its name. The third was still to come, the inauguration of Christian foreign missions. The name "Christian" was given to the followers of Christ in jest by the Antiochians, whose mocking wit delighted in nicknames. The name would sound ridiculous at first, for it was made up of three languages, "Christ" being the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah," both meaning "anointed," and *ian*, the termination, being a Latin ending. "Thus, like the inscription, *Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews*, which Pilate put over the cross, in Hebrew and Greek and Latin, the name 'Christian' enshrines the supreme glory of the gospel, and proclaims the universality of its grace. 'Jesting Pilate' and the mocking Antiochenes were unwitting prophets of the Lord." — *David Smith.*

RELIEF FOR THE JERUSALEM CHRISTIANS. During this year of fruitful and brotherly service, word reached Antioch that the Christians in Jerusalem were in sore distress on account of the great famine which at that time afflicted a large part of the Roman Empire. Antioch in its rich plain was still a land of plenty, and Christianity always renders its followers generous and thoughtful of others. Saul, moreover, had special reason to plan aid for the Jerusalem Christians, since his persecutions had doubtless plunged many a Christian family there into dire poverty. Therefore a relief fund was made up by the Christians of Antioch, and Barnabas and Saul were deputed to carry it to Jerusalem. This they accomplished safely, for the plotters that had sought Saul's life had either lost their animosity or had left the city or were pressing engaged in other directions. When they returned to Antioch they took with them an interesting young man named John Mark, who was the nephew of Barnabas, the son of that Mary whose house was a rendezvous of the Christians in the first days and perhaps contained the upper room of the Last Supper. This was the Mark who in later years wrote the second Gospel.

CO-OPERATION IN CHRISTIAN WORK. Christians are those that live and work with Christ, and they cannot live and work with Christ unless they live and work with one another. The Christian church is a vast partnership, the greatest enterprise in the world. Every Christian should join some church, and then ally himself with all the church organizations he can do justice to, besides supporting all the denominational activities. Saul and Barnabas formed a superb company to do business for the Master. Have you yet formed your company and got "down to business"?

LESSON V. — July 29.

THE FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARIES. — Acts 13: 1-52.

PRINT vs. 1-5, 13-15, 44-49.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* — MATT. 28: 19, 20.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 67.

Primary Topic : PAUL AND HIS FRIEND GO TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Lesson Material : Acts 13: 1-52. Print verses 1-5, 13-15, 44-49.

Memory Verse : Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel. Mark 16: 15.

Junior Topic : PAUL AND BARNABAS SENT AS MISSIONARIES.

Lesson Material : Acts 13: 1-52. Print verses 1-5, 13-15, 44-49.

Memory Verse : The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Acts 13: 2.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW PAUL FOUND HIS LIFE WORK.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE HOLY SPIRIT IN MISSIONS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes may draw outline maps of Asia Minor, the maps showing Cyprus and the eastern end of the Mediterranean. They will mount these on heavy pasteboard or on wood. No places will be named, but large-headed pins will be provided, to be stuck into the map, upright, at the different places touched by Paul. Let a red cord be extended from pin to pin as the journey proceeds. Review.

The Older Classes will study in this lesson the motives back of foreign missions, their scope, and the methods used

to-day. Show that modern missionary methods are the legitimate outgrowth of those used by the first missionaries.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Who should go as foreign missionaries, and how can we increase the number going from our church and community?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's first missionary journey, A.D. 47-49.

Place. — Antioch in Syria to Antioch in Pisidia, through Cyprus from east to west, thence to Perga in Pamphylia, and thence north to Antioch.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

How missionaries are called.
How missionary work is expanding.
Christ as a foreign missionary.
Missionary methods used by Paul and Barnabas.
Ancient and modern Cyprus.
Asia Minor in Paul's day and in ours.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Great Enterprise of Christian Missions.

I. THE FIRST MISSIONARY ORDINATION, vs. 1-5.

Prophets and teachers at Antioch.
The selection of the first missionaries.
Preaching at Salamis.
The missionary call.

II. THE FIRST MISSIONARY TRIUMPH, vs. 6-43.

The blinding of Elymas.
From Cyprus to Antioch in Pisidia.
The first missionary sermon.
Missionary perseverance.

III. THE FIRST MISSIONARY CONFLICT, vs. 44-52.

Jealousy of the Jews.
Turning to the Gentiles.
Removal to Iconium.
The scope of the missionary enterprise.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Brown's *The Why and How of Foreign Missions*.
Barton's *The Unfinished Task*. Doughty's *The Call of the World*. Mott's *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation*. Murray's *The Call of a World Task*.

1. Now there were at Ān'-tī-ōch, in the church that was *there*, prophets and teachers, Bār'-nā-bās, and Sŷm'-ē-ōn that was called Nī'-gēr, and Lū'-çi-ūs of Çŷ-rē'-nē, and Mǎn'-ǎēn the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Bār'-nā-bās and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

I. THE FIRST MISSIONARY ORDINATION, vs. 1-5. 1. Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was *there*.

The Greek is so worded as to call special attention to the *church*. The Christians of Antioch were not long a mere congregation, but were an organized church, and they proved themselves a thoroughly established institution in the best possible way, by setting to work to establish other institutions of the same kind. **Prophets and teachers.** "Prophet" means literally "foreteller," and the prophet had special insight into the future. But the word means also "forth-teller," one who had insight into divine truth and proclaimed it to men, a preacher. Teachers were religious workers of a less exalted order, their labor being confined to the declaration and explanation of religious truth. All prophets were teachers, but not all teachers were prophets. **Barnabas.** He was the friend of Saul, the first head of the Antioch church. See the last lesson. **And Symeon that was called Niger.** Nothing is known of this Symeon (Simon), though some identify him with the Simon of Cyrene in North Africa who took up Christ's cross when the Saviour fainted beneath it. The additional name, Niger (black) is held to substantiate this identification. **And Lucius of Cyrene.** Men of Cyrene were among the first Christians who came to Antioch (Acts 11: 20), and this Lucius may have been one of them. There was a famous school of medicine at Cyrene, and some have identified Lucius with the Dr. Luke who wrote the Acts; but the names are quite different, Luke's being Loukas in the Greek. **And Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch.** This was Herod Antipas, who put to death John the Baptist, and to him our Lord was sent by Pilate during his trial. Now his foster-brother becomes a leader in the Christian church! "Tetrarch" means "ruler of a fourth," and his father, Herod the Great, left him the sovereignty of one-fourth of his kingdom, namely, Galilee, to which Peræa was afterwards added. We know nothing of his foster-brother except this connection with the church in Antioch. **And Saul.** Named last out of modesty, since he was undoubtedly Luke's informant regarding these matters; moreover, he was probably, of the five, the last to reach Antioch.

2. **And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted.** The one Greek word translated "ministered to the Lord" is that which has been taken over in our English word, "liturgy"; it here signifies the conduct of the Lord's Supper and of other forms of public worship, and also the service of the church as the members might need, including instruction in religion. The reference to fasting indicates the prominence of that means of grace in the early church, whose members seem to have fasted regularly at least once a week. On those days they had more time for prayer and

3. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Sê-leû'-çiâ; and from thence they sailed to Çy'-prûs.

for religious meetings, and their minds were the clearer for religious meditation, and for such communications from the Holy Spirit as these Antioch leaders received. **The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.** The Spirit spoke to and through the prophets just mentioned. Saul from his conversion was set apart by the Holy Spirit for the great work of foreign missions (Acts 9: 15; 22: 10, 15; 26: 16, 17). Barnabas was providentially raised up to be his comrade, for he was probably educated much as Saul had been, he had introduced Saul to the church in Jerusalem, had brought him to Antioch, and had labored successfully with him there for a year. In the inception and progress of foreign missions, from the beginning to this day, we can trace clearly the controlling force of the Holy Spirit.

3. **Then, when they had fasted and prayed.** The fast and prayers mentioned before were general, putting their minds into condition to receive the message from the Holy Spirit. This act of prayer and fasting was particular, being bent specifically upon a blessing for the new missionaries and their vastly important errand. **And laid their hands on them.** This laying on of hands was in token of the bestowal of the special grace and might of the Holy Spirit, enabling Barnabas and Saul to perform their task in the Spirit's power and with results well pleasing to him. It was the act of ordination, and was probably performed by the prophets and teachers in the presence of the whole church. Such solemn services of dedication are held when missionaries are sent forth to-day, to the home and foreign fields. **They sent them away.** "Missionary," from the Latin *missus*, "one sent," means by derivation the same as "apostle," which is two Greek words meaning "sent forth."

4. **So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit.** Theirs was a human and a divine commission. The representatives of the church were acting under the direction of the Holy Spirit. As they laid hands on the missionaries and sent them forth, he laid upon their hearts his empowering blessing and went forth with them. Every missionary should be upheld by the consciousness of this double commission; are we church members true to our part of it? **Went down to Seleucia.** The seaport of Antioch, sixteen miles distant; see the last lesson. Probably, according to the Eastern custom, many if not all of the church at Antioch accompanied Barnabas and Saul as far as Seleucia. **And from thence they sailed to Cyprus.** As



Barnabas was a native of Cyprus, and probably widely acquainted there, that large island in the eastern Mediterranean made an ideal starting point for their journey. Moreover, Cyprus was not far from Antioch, only a few hours' sail away, seventy miles, and the Cyprites in the Antioch church would furnish the two missionaries with introductions to their relatives and friends in Cyprus. For still another reason, there were many Jews in Cyprus, drawn thither by the rich copper mines, and they would be the best soil in which to plant a new church. Our word "copper" comes from Cyprus, which in Greek is Kuprios; it was called in Latin *Cyprium aes*, "Cyprian brass." The Cyprian copper mines were at one time farmed to Herod the Great. The main portion of Cyprus is 110 miles long and from 30 to 60 miles broad. It is very mountainous, and the valleys among the mountains are at certain seasons very unhealthy.

5. And when they were at Sāl'-ă-mīs, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant.

5. **And when they were at Salamis.** This city, on the eastern coast of Cyprus, was the place nearest to Seleucia, and afforded a fine harbor. Teucer, from the island of Salamis off the coast of Greece, is said to have founded the city. Its modern name is Famagusta. **They proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.** "The word of God" which they proclaimed was the fact that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, God's Word of salvation to lost souls (John 1: 1). They made this great announcement first in the Jewish synagogues, as always throughout Paul's ministry, because the Jews were readiest to receive it on account of their history and religious training, and because the most sympathetic and broad-minded Gentiles also would be in attendance on the synagogue services. In those services it was the custom to invite visiting Jews to take part, much as in our prayer meetings, and thus Barnabas and Saul had their opportunity. **And they had also John as their attendant.** John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, had been brought by Barnabas and Saul from Jerusalem when they returned from their ministrations to the poor Christians of Jerusalem. He was the son of Mary whose house was a church center in the early days and probably the scene of the Last Supper. Some think that John Mark was "the man with the pitcher," and that he was the young man who, after Christ's arrest, was seized by the soldiers, twisted out of his one garment, and fled naked. We do not know just what his work was as the attendant of the apostles, but he probably cared for their personal wants, bought food, obtained lodgings, arranged meetings, and may have talked with people about Christ, telling them what he knew and seeking to interest them in the gospel message. All great enterprises are furthered by humble workers, and gain much of their power from their massed energies.

THE MISSIONARY CALL. "Because of the infinite need of men without Christ; because of the possibilities of men of every race and condition who take Christ as the Leader of their lives; because of the command of our Lord which has acquired added force as a result of nineteen centuries of discovery, of opening of doors, of experience of the Christian Church; because of the shameful neglect of the past; because of the impending crisis and the urgency of the situation in all parts of the non-Christian world; because of the opportunity for a greatly accelerated movement in the present; because of the danger of neglecting to enter upon a great onward movement; because of the constraining memories of the Cross of Christ and the love wherewith he loved us, it is the solemn duty of the Christians of this generation to do their utmost to evangelize the world." — *John R. Mott.*

"The sobering question challenges us sharply: Is our religion really worth giving away to other nations? Is mine? Every Christian life is a point of export for Christianity." — *J. Lovell Murray.*

"Your money and your life! What greater gifts can a man bring? God cares more for men than for anything else in the world. It is life laid down for him which gives joy to the heart of the sacrificial Saviour. But money represents life — nay, it is coined personality. Millions of money beyond any previous gift will be needed before the world can be won." — *W. E. Doughty.*

II. THE FIRST MISSIONARY TRIUMPH, vs. 6-43. THE BLINDING OF ELYMAS. Nothing is said about the work in Salamis, where the apostles may not have been very successful, and where seemingly they aroused no opposition. They travelled westward through the island, about one hundred miles, scattering as they went the seed of the word, until they reached Paphos, the chief city of Cyprus, and the seat of the Roman government. There they encountered a Jewish magician, a practiser of fortune-telling and other arts based on the ready superstition of the people. His name was Bar-Jesus, that is, the Son of Joshua, but he had assumed the Arabic title of Elymas, which means "the Wise." He was also called "Magus," "the Magician," like the "wise men" or "magi" who came from the East to find the Christ Child. He had joined himself to the retinue of the proconsul (the head of a senatorial province), whose name was Sergius Paulus, and who was apparently a sincere seeker for the truth, and not at all a dupe of Elymas. The sorcerer, however, perceiving that Sergius Paulus was looking with favor upon the missionaries and their teachings, opposed them with all the power of his crafty and slanderous tongue. Thereupon Saul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, announced to the wizard that as a punishment for his wilful spiritual blindness he should be afflicted with physical blindness for a season, even as Saul himself had been. Immediately the

13. Now Paul and his company set sail from Pā'-phös, and came to Pēr'-gā in Pām-phŷl'-i-ā: and John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem.

blindness fell upon him, to his terrible dismay, and he groped about begging that some one would take his hand and lead him. Sergius Paulus, astonished at the miracle, believed in the truths which Saul and Barnabas had been preaching, and probably was baptized into the Christian faith, the first recorded fruit of the first missionary tour.

From this point Saul steps to the front in the expedition, and Luke speaks no longer of "Barnabas and Saul" but of "Paul and Barnabas"; for, be it noted, at this point Saul seems to have dropped his Hebrew name, and to have taken up the Greek-Latin name which he had probably

carried also from boyhood, as more suited to his work among the Gentiles. Some think that Saul called himself Paul after this Sergius Paulus, but that is not likely; nor is it likely that he adopted the name at this time as an act of humility, since it is derived from the Latin *paulus*, meaning "little."

FROM CYPRUS TO ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA. 13. Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos. Note that it is "Paul and his company" and not "Barnabas and his company." The more forceful character inevitably comes to the front and takes the lead. And came to Perga in Pamphylia. Paphos, on the western shore of Cyprus, was the seaport nearest to Perga, which was reached by sailing northwest. Perga was the capital of Pamphylia, which was the division of Asia Minor situated in the middle of the southern coast, Lycia being west of it and Cilicia, Paul's province, lying to the east. The missionaries do not seem to have preached in Perga. Perhaps Paul was pressing on to the more important cities of the interior; perhaps the little party was attacked by malaria which infests that seaboard, and hastened to the more healthful plateau to the north. And John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. The cause of John's defection is not told us; in view of his faithfulness in later years, Luke slurs over this less honorable portion of his history. It may have been because he did not like the leadership of Paul, somewhat supplanting that of his uncle Barnabas. It may have been that he was seized by malaria and was too sick to go on. Perhaps he was homesick for Jerusalem and his mother's home. Perhaps he was dismayed by the untried perils ahead of him and felt that the enterprise was taking on a magnitude and difficulty for which he had not bargained. Whatever may have been the reason for his return, Paul disapproved of it; the young man, having put his hand to the plough, had looked backward. As we shall see, Paul would not take Mark with him on his next missionary journey, and on that account Barnabas separated from him. But Mark turned out well, labored zealously with Barnabas and then with Peter, was helpful to Paul, and is affectionately mentioned by him in his Epistles.

14. But they, passing through from Perga. They went "through" Pamphylia, starting from Perga and going northward, and then "through" Pisidia, the province



Elymas Struck with Blindness.

Raphael.

14. But they, passing through from Pēr'-gà, came to Ān'-tī-ōch of Pī-sīd'-ī-ā; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

15. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

to the north of Pamphylia, crossing both districts until they came to Antioch of Pisidia. The journey was through a wild mountain region, infested by bandits from whom Barnabas and Paul were in great danger. They were compelled to ford innumerable mountain torrents, they must often have been hungry, and their bodies must have been very weary. Later, in writing to the church which he had founded in Corinth (2 Cor. 11 : 26, 27), Paul probably had the hardships of this journey in mind, together with many others. But the courageous missionaries passed on unflinching. **Came to Antioch of Pisidia.** The missionaries had travelled from Perga about ninety miles in a straight course, but much farther as their path bent about among the mountains. Other cities besides the two Antiochs of Pisidia and of Syria were named from Antiochus ; one of them was in Caria. This Antioch, though in Pisidia, was regarded by the Romans for administrative purposes as being in Galatia, the great province occupying most of the central tableland of Asia Minor, and was the center of government and of the army for the southern half of Galatia. Later, in writing to the Galatians (Gal. 4 : 13 f.), Paul said that his first preaching to them was "owing to an infirmity of the flesh," which they assuaged with much kindness. It seems likely that Paul had breathed malaria into his system in the lowlands of Pamphylia, and that the germs of that very distressing disease developed, as often happens, when he reached the highlands, preventing his pressing on according to his plans, and forcing him to tarry in Antioch — a stay of which he made the best possible use. **And they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day.** "Though he is the apostle of the Gentiles, it is ever to the synagogue that Paul first finds his way. For the law of Moses ought to be a better schoolmaster to bring men to Christ than the law of nature." — *Cambridge Bible*. Even in that remote province there were enough Jews in Antioch to form and support a synagogue. **And sat down.** Some consider that this means that Paul and Barnabas took seats on the platform where rabbis would sit and teach.

15. **And after the reading of the law and the prophets.** The Law was the Pentateuch ("Five Books"), the first five Books of the Bible, written by Moses. It was read through in the synagogues every three years, a designated portion each Sabbath. The Prophets included Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets, and also the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. A third division was the Hagiographa, or Sacred Writings, which included the remaining books of the Old Testament. A second portion, from the Prophets, was read each Sabbath, the theme of the selection being consonant with that of the selection from the Law. The portion of the Law read each Sabbath was divided into seven parts, which were assigned to seven readers. The first seventh of the portion of the Law for the following Sabbath was read in the synagogues on Sabbath afternoons, and the same portion also on Monday and Thursday mornings — four times in all. On Sabbath afternoons also selections from the Hagiographa were read. **The rulers of the synagogue sent unto them.** These "rulers" were a committee who selected the readers of the portions of the law for the day, and the speakers that followed. Usually the speaker was also the reader of the concluding portion of the Law, and commented upon it. Paul and Barnabas had probably been in Antioch for a few days, so that their character and ability were known to the synagogue committee. **Saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.** This address was especially appropriate to Barnabas, whose name may mean "Son of exhortation" as well as "Son of consolation," and perhaps the ruler who summoned the strangers thought of this. We note the similarity of the meeting to our modern prayer meetings, and see how far back in the ages that institution is rooted.

16. **And Paul stood up, and beckoning with the hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, hearken.** This gesture seems to have been a favorite one with Paul ; see Acts 12 : 17. The apostle addresses the Israelites present, and also the Jewish proselytes, "ye that fear God." Very likely also some Gentiles were present, but Paul did not formally include them in his audience.

THE FIRST MISSIONARY SERMON. As was evidently customary with the early Christian preachers, *e.g.*, Peter at Pentecost and Stephen before the Sanhedrin, Paul began his speech with a summary of Hebrew history, carrying it down to King David. From this David, he said, Jehovah has raised up a Saviour as he promised in the Scriptures, and his name was Jesus ("Jehovah Saves"). Paul described the work of Christ's forerunner, John the Baptist, and his testimony to the Messiah, and then hastened to the personal application: "To you, men of Israel and Gentile proselytes to Judaism, to *you* is this Saviour sent; for the Jews of Jerusalem did not recognize him as the Messiah, and did not heed the fulfilment of all prophecy in him, though the prophets were read every Sabbath in their hearing as they have been read in your hearing to-day. They actually brought about his crucifixion, so completing unwittingly the fulfilment of prophecy. But we have good news for you! God raised him from the grave! He was seen for many days! Those who saw him are even now bearing witness to the glorious fact! And by this resurrection he fulfilled still other prophecies of Scripture. Now the special meaning of all this for you is that this risen Jesus is your Saviour from sin. The law of Moses can point out your sin and condemn you for it, but it cannot forgive you for it; Jesus can. Verily a great salvation! But the greater the salvation, the greater is his condemnation who rejects it. Do not scorn this wonderful offer of God as did the Jews of Jerusalem, for all that despise it shall perish."

Luke's record of this first missionary sermon must have been dictated by Paul himself, and we can see from the outline how powerful it must have been, and how perfectly fitted to the occasion and the audience; but it is only a bare outline, the briefest summary of what must have been a long and impassioned oration, the inspiration and model for innumerable missionary sermons since that day. It had an immediate and powerful effect, for the congregation begged that the sermon might be repeated to them the next Sabbath, and many of the Jews and proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas to their lodgings to hear more about this wonderful Son of God. Some of them, at least, must have declared themselves ready to become Christians at once, for the apostles exhorted them to "continue in the grace of God." All preachers and Sunday-school teachers and evangelistic workers may well study this effective sermon, and discover for themselves the secret of its effectiveness: it simply held up Jesus Christ as the Saviour of lost sinners.

MISSIONARY PERSEVERANCE. "The evangelization of the world is not an easy task. The effort would not and should not command the devotion of so many able and consecrated men and women, if the work to be done and the difficulties to be overcome were not such as to demand unusual strength of body, mind, and faith. (1) In all tropical countries the climate is hostile to the white man. (2) Probably there exists no more formidable barrier to the progress of missionary work than the vernacular languages. (3) The natural sinfulness of the people to whom the missionaries go, compels them to rise in direct opposition to the preaching of the gospel of Christ. (4) Whether the religion centers in a person, as Islam, or in a system, as Hinduism, or whether it has been transmitted by tradition, like the cruder forms of nature worship, it is supremely difficult to persuade a person, much more a people, to accept a change. (5) It requires courage for one who is in the direct succession of fifty generations of superstitions and has heard the accumulated traditions of unnumbered cases of the afflictions of those who dared defy the anger of their deities, to accept Christianity and shape his life and practices accordingly. Other obstacles are: (6) the deep-seated prejudices of the people; (7) Oriental duplicity; (8) the ignorance of the masses; (9) the self-interest of native leaders; (10) the poverty of the people; (11) the difficulty of understanding the East; (12) the isolation of the missionary; (13) the harmful influence of unchristian foreigners; (14) the limitations of men and money; (15) the apathy or hostility at home. These difficulties must be faced by every foreign missionary, but the persistent, unwavering, conquering force of the modern missionary movement is winning the day." — *Condensed from Secretary James L. Barton.*

III. THE FIRST MISSIONARY CONFLICT, vs. 44-49. Paul was a good fighter. All missionaries must be good fighters, for they have to contend against "the world powers of this darkness," they must struggle to the death with the arch-enemy of souls. Paul began to fight as soon as he began the Christian life, and at the very outset of his missionary career he encountered bitter opposition.

44. And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. Nothing is more popular than the word of God, faithfully pre-

44. And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God.

45. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed.

46. And Paul and Bär'-nă-bās spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*,
I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,
That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

48. And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

sented. It is the word of safety, of purity, of forgiveness, of comfort, of peace, of joy and strength. It brings to its hearers all that in their heart of hearts they most intensely want.

45. **But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy.** *They* could not draw such a crowd with their message, and they selfishly grudged that power to any one else. More than that, they grudged to the Gentiles Paul's offer of free admission to the benefits of what they regarded as a strictly Jewish salvation. If these Gentiles were willing to be circumcised and to submit to all the Jewish law and ceremonial requirements, they might be admitted within the pale; but these strangers were throwing down all barriers. **And contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul.** They denied the deity of Jesus, and therefore his Messiahship, together with all the conclusions which Paul had justly drawn from those facts. **And blasphemed.** They blasphemed by mocking the name of the Son of God and deriding his claims.

46. **And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly.** It required great courage, in a distant city, amid a host of foreigners, to set themselves against the leaders of their own people, the men who would be their natural protectors in any difficulty and their natural aids in their enterprise; but bravery is a quality which every true missionary possesses, and Paul most of all exhibited courage through all his life. **And said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you.** Thus they followed the example of their Master, whose work was almost solely among the Jews, and also obeyed the dictates of common sense, following "the line of least resistance." **Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life.** They had not merely refused to believe, but they had pushed the gospel away from them with bitterness and wrath. Paul's sarcasm is keen: they had been judging themselves and not him. Jesus had bidden his followers not to cast their pearls before swine. These Jews of Antioch had placed themselves among the swine. So do all who reject the gospel; by that act they declare themselves unworthy of the greatest gift and honor that could be bestowed upon them — eternal life. **Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.** With this epochal saying, repeated by Paul on other similar occasions, the great Apostle to the Gentiles inaugurated his life work. Henceforth Christianity was not confined to one small nation and one race, but was to go "into all the world," as its Founder had commanded.

47. **For so hath the Lord commanded us.** Paul would not have taken such a step without the definite command of the Lord, given him by Christ himself on the Damascus road (Acts 26: 17), and repeated three days later through Ananias (Acts 9: 15). *Saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles.* This quotation from Isa. 49: 6 shows that the offer of the gospel to the Gentiles was not an outgrowth of any sudden emergency, but was a part of God's age-long plans for the salvation of the entire world. **That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.** The missionaries of the cross take this command literally. No region is too barren, too inhospitable, too unhealthy, too savage, or too distant and difficult of access for the servants of Jesus Christ. They press on wherever there are souls to save.

48. **And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God.** By their ready reception of the gospel message they proved that it was meant for

49. And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region.

them. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. The doctrine of foreordination springs from the truth of the foreknowledge and omnipotence of God. He orders all things, and the admission of any soul into eternal life is according to his will. Yet he is not willing that any should perish, but is eager that all shall be saved. No philosopher can reconcile the fact of God's foreordination with the fact of man's free will, but both, we know, are true. The doctrine of election does not contravene the gospel invitation, "He that will, let him take the water of life freely."

49. And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region. This implies a stay in Antioch and its neighborhood of several weeks, perhaps several months.

REMOVAL TO ICONIUM. But the Jews were not content with dismissing Paul and Barnabas from their synagogue; they would not have them working in their city, doubtless still among the Jews, and certainly with vigor among the Gentiles. They had many agents of persecution, including the civic authorities, who could easily be persuaded that the strange preachers were liable to raise turmoils in the city; including also the more bigoted of the Jews, and especially their leading women, always the bulwark of conservatism. The persecution was so severe that the missionaries departed indignantly from Antioch, shaking off the dust of the city from their feet as a testimony against the people who were themselves to be shaken off from the offered mercy of God. But they left behind them a happy company of believers, rejoicing in their new knowledge of the pardoning love of God. Thus the two apostles walked away to the nearest large city, Iconium.

THE SCOPE OF THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE. "Foreign missions are the realization of the world programme of the Church of God. Everywhere Christian missions have gone, they have been a reconstructive force. Missions are a reconstructive economic force. Lamps, kerosene oil, watches, clocks, furnaces, glass windows, sewing machines, agricultural implements, machinist's tools, printing presses — missionaries introduce modern civilization. Missions are a reconstructive social force. They have effected striking changes in the popular attitude toward woman, in the status of the wife, in the education of girls, in the care of the sick, and in creating a sentiment against harmful drugs. It was the missionary who first in non-Christian lands showed interest in the blind, the deaf and dumb, the orphaned, the leprous, the sick, and the insane. Missions are a reconstructive intellectual force. The missionary has planted the church and the school side by side. Missions are a reconstructive moral force, advocating good, hating wrong, fighting intemperance, gambling, dishonesty, and the social evil, purifying the moral atmosphere. Missions are a reconstructive political force. Missionaries carefully avoid political affiliations, but the ideas of God, of man, and of duty which Christianity inculcates invariably effect profound changes in the body politic. Missions are a reconstructive spiritual force. Missionaries are preachers and evangelists above all else. They believe that man's supreme need is the quickening of conscience, the discernment between right and wrong, the clarification of moral vision, the power that is conveyed in the gospel of Christ. Sin has not ceased. The lurid glare of it is written across the sky. If men have ever needed Christ, they do to-day." — *Condensed from Secretary Arthur J. Brown.*

LESSON VI. — August 5.

PAUL IN A PAGAN COUNTRY. — Acts 14: 1-28.

PRINT vs. 8-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound.* — PHIL. 4: 12.

Devotional Reading: Matt. 5: 10: 16.

Primary Topic: PAUL AND BARNABAS PREACH TO THE HEATHEN.

Lesson Material: Acts 14: 1-28. Print verses 8-20.

Memory Verse: We bring you good tidings. Acts 14: 15.

Junior Topic : PAUL AND BARNABAS PREACH TO THE HEATHEN.

Lesson Material : Acts 14 : 1-28. Print verses 8-20.

Memory Verse : We . . . bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God. Acts 14 : 15.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL UNMOVED BY FLATTERY AND DANGER.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE HEROISM OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will continue the map exercise, reviewing the course of Paul in the first missionary journey, and carrying back the cord to the starting-point. A graphic presentation of the lesson may be made in a series of squares on the blackboard or a large piece of paper, using short straight lines for men, triangles and tiny squares for houses, a horizontal line for Paul stoned, lines bent toward Paul for the stoners, etc. Employ blue for Paul, red for Barnabas, green for Timothy, and so on. Teach the great lesson of courage in facing danger.

The Older Classes will study modern missions in relation to danger, and the heroism of the missionaries. Any general collection of brief missionary biographies will furnish ample illustrative material. Impress the lesson of the responsibility of the church at home for the support of missionaries.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What more should our church be doing for the cause of missions ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The close of the first missionary journey, A.D. 47 to 49 — probably the fall and winter of A.D. 49.

Place. — Lystra and then Derbe, returning through Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and Perga to Antioch of Syria.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Compare the death of Herod, Acts 12 : 20-23, with the action of Paul at Lystra.
Stonings in the Bible.
Present condition of Lystra and Derbe.
Paul's arguments from nature.
Paul's hatred of idolatry.
Missions and the "home base."

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul Unmoved by Flattery and Danger.

I. THE HEALING OF THE CRIPPLE, vs. 1-10.

The work in Iconium.
Opposition in Iconium.
The miracle at Lystra.
The value of medical missions.

II. THE ATTEMPTED WORSHIP, vs. 11-18.

"The gods have come!"
Oxen for sacrifice.
Paul and Barnabas protest.
The struggle with idolatry to-day.

III. THE STONING OF PAUL, vs. 19-28.

Paul marvellously preserved.
The return from Derbe.
Reporting at Antioch.
Perils of modern missionaries.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul*. Peloubet's *Acts*. Wells's *Into All the World*. Pounder's *St. Paul and His Cities*. Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire and Cities of St. Paul*. Murray's *World Friendship, Inc.* Barrows's *Christianity, the World Religion*. Speer's *The Light of the World*. Brown's *The Foreign Missionary*.

I. THE HEALING OF THE CRIPPLE, vs. 1-10. THE WORK IN ICONIUM. Iconium, to which Paul and Barnabas went when expelled from Antioch, was also in Pisidia, lying east of Antioch. Its modern name is Konieh, a contraction of the ancient name, and it is still a large town.

At Iconium Paul and Barnabas repeated the procedure which had become customary with them, beginning their work at the place most likely to furnish immediate adherents to Christianity, the Jewish synagogue. Here they spoke often with great boldness, for they knew that the Lord was with them. Moreover, their testimony to Christ was confirmed by the working of miracles, doubtless chiefly if not altogether the healing of the sick, so that "a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed." No one can doubt Christianity when it is thus known by its fruits, either at home or in the foreign field.

OPPOSITION IN ICONIUM. But in Iconium, as elsewhere, the chief difficulty of the missionaries arose from the bitter hostility of the Jews who, in their hearts recognizing the truth of the message, refused to yield obedience to it. These Jews were not only themselves determined opponents of Paul and Barnabas, but they used their influence to stir up Gentile enmity, so that before long the entire city was split into two factions, Christian and anti-Christian; and passions rose to such a pitch that a mob was formed to maltreat the missionaries and even to stone them to death.

8. And at Lÿs'-trâ there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

9. The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole,

But Paul and Barnabas were warned in time by their friends, and were conducted safely out of the city, being brought to Lystra, a town almost south of Iconium.

"Scarcely a trace of the ancient glories of Lystra now remains. Sir William Ramsay journeyed within a few yards of the site of the city without ever realizing that he was practically on the spot for which he was searching; and it was only the discovery of a Lystrian coin, and a single monumental inscription, by Professor Sterrett of Cornell University, a few years later, that settled forever the site of the ancient city for which explorers and archaeologists had been so long searching. . . . The most interesting site in all Lystra is that of the temple where Paul and Barnabas were hailed as gods. At least there is every probability that it has been discovered, for on the level plain, just before the land begins to rise to the hill on which the chief buildings were situated, on the southeast side of the citadel, stands a pedestal on which is an inscription showing that it was dedicated to Augustus, whose worship was connected with the chief temple. Here undoubtedly was the temple of 'Zeus-before-the-City,' and wonderful discoveries and confirmations of Scripture doubtless await the excavator's spade. — *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D., LL.D.*

THE MIRACLE AT LYSTRA. 8. And at Lystra there sat a certain man. He doubtless sat begging in some public place, probably the market square, like the cripple in Jerusalem (Acts 3: 2) whose friends brought him every day to beg at the Beautiful



Paul and Barnabas at Lystra,

raphael.

From the Tapestry designed for the Sistine Chapel, Rome. Cartoon in South Kensington Museum, London.

Gate of the temple. Lacking a synagogue — and probably there were not enough Jews in that remote city to establish one — the apostles would seek some frequented place for their preaching. **Impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.** Remember that Acts was written by Luke, a doctor, whose accounts of maladies are therefore very exact and thorough, as here. A life-long lameness like this would stiffen and deform the entire body, and render the miracle of healing still more marvellous. There was no room here for a cure by "suggestion," the favorite explanation of infidels.

9. **The same heard Paul speaking.** Very likely Paul was telling about Christ's power and describing some of the miracles of healing worked by the Saviour. Thus the poor man's hopes would be aroused. **Who, fastening his eyes upon him.** Luke, Paul's medical attendant, gives us several hints of the apostle's strained gaze fixed

10. Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked.

11. And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

upon persons and objects as if he had difficulty in distinguishing them clearly, as we know he did on at least one occasion (Acts 23: 1; compare Acts 13: 9). Probably Paul's eyes were always weak after the blindness which followed his experience on the Damascus road. Preachers, evangelists, and missionaries are always scrutinizing their audiences eagerly, if perchance they can note signs in any face of a personal interest in the gospel, which the speaker will follow up. **And seeing that he had faith to be made whole.** Paul could read faces. The cripple's awakening faith illumined his countenance. Nothing will so transform a face as expectation.

10. **Said with a loud voice.** If Paul had not been confident that the Lord would honor his own faith and work a miracle through him, he would not have shouted out his command for all the crowd to hear, but would have uttered it in a discreetly low voice, perhaps a whisper, so that a possible failure might be known to very few, and then there would surely have been a failure! **Stand upright on thy feet.** The cripple was bidden to do what would seem to him absolutely impossible. Some such experience comes to every Christian convert. He is set tasks that appear beyond his strength, and, relying on Christ's strength, finds that he can do them. **And he leaped up and walked.** These verbs, which are in the same tense in English, are in the Greek in different tenses, "leaped" being in such a form as to indicate a single act, and "walked" implying by its ending continuous and repeated action, "he kept on walking." It was no miracle for the instant, but was permanently effective. That is the way it must be with a converted Christian: his change of heart may be instantaneous, but it must be proved by a changed life.

THE VALUE OF MEDICAL MISSIONS. An illustration of what medical missions accomplish is the account of the operation performed by Dr. Cyril H. Haas of Adana, in Asia Minor, one day early in the World War. The favorite wife of a Turkish governor was near death and the medical missionary, when called in, saw that an immediate operation was necessary. The Turkish doctors did not dare to consent, fearing for their lives if the operation was unsuccessful, and finally agreed only when the American doctor signed a paper assuming full responsibility. After the operation Dr. Haas prayed as never before in his life that the patient might recover, and this she did. "The governor was no saint. He had won a prize for inventing the most painful method of torturing Armenians. 'If permission were granted me,' he said, 'I should command that every one of the ten thousand Christians here should be butchered.' But his gratitude to the skilful American missionary knew no bounds. A little later, when Dr. Haas was stricken with typhus and his life was despaired of, this genius of cruelty sent each day to inquire as to his condition. He would say, 'The missionary doctor is my brother; I love him.' When the crisis was past, he insisted on being the first to come as a visitor to the doctor's bedside to kiss him and express his good wishes. This Turkish official was not alone in loving the American doctor and wishing for his recovery. The entire population held him in affection, and even the Moslems went daily to the mosque to intercede with Allah that he might be restored to health." — *J. Lovell Murray.*

II. THE ATTEMPTED WORSHIP, vs. 11-18. 11. **And when the multitude saw what Paul had done.** They might not have been able to understand his Greek, for we may be sure that here, as always, Paul ascribed the miracle to Jesus Christ; but they could understand the deed, and that it was brought about through Paul's agency. **They lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia.** Lycaonia ("Wolf-land") was a division of the Roman province Galatia. "The boundary of Phrygia and Lycaonia passed between Iconium and Lystra." — *W. M. Calder.* Evidently Paul, though he spoke "in tongues" more than the other apostles, did not understand the Lycaonian language, or he would have protested quickly against their ideas and purposes. The two missionaries went off quietly to their lodgings, ignorant of what was planned by the people. **The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.** The ancient Greeks and Latins had many legends of the gods assuming human shape and visiting mortals in that disguise. One of these had its scene in the province of Phrygia near by. Zeus (Jupiter) and Hermes (Mercury),

12. And they called Bär'-nă-bās, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker.

13. And the priest of Jupiter whose *temple* was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes.

14. But when the apostles, Bär'-nă-bās and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out

15. And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is:

his attendant, came to earth in the persons of two weary travellers, whom the cruel villagers stoned; but they were rescued by Philemon, a peasant, and Baucis, his wife, and taken hospitably into their home. On leaving their kind entertainers, the gods transformed their hut into a splendid temple, of which they were made guardians, at their request, in the forms of an oak and a linden, while their churlish neighbors were overwhelmed in a terrible flood. Ovid told the tale in his *Metamorphoses*, Book VIII., and Hawthorne repeated it vividly in *Tanglewood Tales*.

12. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter. He was probably the older man, and certainly the taller and more imposing; Paul himself describes himself as "weak" in bodily presence (2 Cor. 10:10). The Lystrians would naturally think of Jupiter first, because his temple belonged to their city. And Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. Mercury was the god who attended Jupiter and was his spokesman. It has been made perfectly clear before this that Paul's oratorical gifts had made him the leading speaker of the two missionaries. Mercury was the god of oratory.

13. And the priest of Jupiter whose temple was before the city. He was the priest of "Zeus-before-the-City," the local name of this god. His temple was just outside the city gates. Brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes. "The gates" of the city, perhaps, or, less likely, the portals of the temple. Most likely of all, the portals of the house in which Barnabas and Paul were lodged. They probably brought some temporary altar with them. The oxen were to be sacrificed to Barnabas and Paul. The garlands were to adorn the altar, or, as was very common, to be placed on the heads of the victims. Sometimes the worshippers themselves wore garlands.

14. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it. They saw the crowd and noted the excitement, and from a window or door of their lodging inquired what it all meant. They rent their garments. Among all people, whether their language could be understood or not, the rending of their garments would be known to imply abhorrence of the contemplated deed. And sprang forth among the multitude, crying out. From this action it seems plain that the priest, victim, altar, and crowd were all in front of Paul's lodging, from the door of which Barnabas and Paul sprang forth among them, sending their impetuous voices far ahead of them in order to stop the sacrilege as soon as possible.

15. And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you. "Passions" means feelings, nature. Cheats and frauds would have been tempted to accept the worship, pose as gods, and use for their own selfish ends



From an ancient altar.

Jupiter and Mercury.

Jupiter is represented as holding in one hand a scepter and in the other a thunderbolt. Mercury holds in one hand a purse, the emblem of commerce, and in the other the caduceus.

16. Who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways.

17. And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.

18. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

the influence accorded them by the superstitious people ; but Barnabas and Paul knew better than to do any evil expecting that good would come from it. **And bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God.** " Good tidings " is the same as " gospel " and " evangel." " Vain things," empty things, is the familiar Old Testament designation of idols and idolatrous rites such as the Lystrians were about to celebrate. They were empty of truth, of usefulness, of goodness, of any comfort or peace. The apostles did not intend to destroy their faith in these idols without substituting something better ; there would be no good tidings in that. The better thing was a living God, who could help, cheer, forgive, uplift, and bless in every way — the Father, disclosed to men in his Son. **Who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is.** The heathen religion which these Lystrians followed was essentially a worship of nature. Jupiter was the god of the heavens, of the rain, the thunder, the lightning. They had gods for the earth, the sea, the trees, the flowers, the grain, and for all mundane and celestial phenomena. They are all false gods, said the apostles ; there is only one Maker of all things, who is to be worshipped in singleness of heart.

16. **Who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways.** The people of Lystra might well have pointed to the undoubted antiquity of their religion and have scouted the novelty of the new religion proposed to them. " Why didn't your one great God disclose himself before ? " they may have asked. " Because the right time had not come," the apostles virtually said. " He would give you a full experience of your own ways. He would allow you to worship false gods that by constant disappointment in them you might prove their falsity."

17. **And yet he left not himself without witness.** It was not because God did not care for men that he allowed them to fall into idolatries ; it was because he cared too much for them to force them into helpless submission to his will, as the inanimate and brute creations are forced. All through nature he has set sign-boards pointing to himself, which he longs for all his children to follow of their own loving will. **In that he did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.** The argument is that a universe of mere chance would be a chaos, it would not be the kindly, beautiful, well-ordered universe we see about us. All the workings of nature are so beneficent as to prove a loving heart behind them. The heathen deities were supposed to dwell apart from men, by themselves, in a lofty and isolated heaven, from which they descended casually, often to play some trick on men. The heathen had no conception of a God of love, dwelling with his people and helping them in all their ways. This conception the apostles sought to give them.

18. **And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.** The ways of heathenism are fixed by long habit. For uncounted generations they have worshipped their vain gods, until idolatry and its false notions are part of their very nature. There are no greater miracles in gospel history than the thousands of undoubted and complete conversions from this awful state to that of reasonable, pure, and happy Christianity. But the missionaries do not find it easy, any more than Barnabas and Paul did.

THE STRUGGLE WITH IDOLATRY TO-DAY. It is fashionable in certain quarters to magnify the good in non-Christian religions. But " beneath the shining examples of the elect few in the non-Christian world there is a vast area of idolatry, and pollution, and unrest, and superstition, and cruelty, which can never be healed by the forces which are found in the non-Christian systems." — *John Henry Barrows*. The non-Christian religions sanction unmentionable foulness ; render the lives of women and children, the sick and the aged, often pitiable in the extreme ; foster polygamy and lust, poverty and disease, ignorance and fear ; and do not contain the seeds of progress and improvement. In Christ alone is hope for the sins and miseries of humanity.

19. But there came Jews thither from Ān'-tī-ōeh and Ī-eō'-nī-ūm: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

20. But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Bār'-nā-bās to Dēr'-bē.

In its struggle with the false religions Christianity is winning everywhere. " Mohammedanism is spreading in Africa and India, but it makes no effort of any significance to convert America or Europe or Japan. The bounds of Confucianism are contracting. Shintoism has withdrawn from the lists as a religion, and claims now only the place of a court ceremonial and a burial rite. Zoroastrianism, one of the worthiest of the ancient religions, has almost vanished in the land of its origin, and numbers comparatively few adherents in India. Hinduism is geographically limited, save as a philosophy, by its principle of caste, and Buddhism is rejected in Japan by the very men who might succeed in propagating it elsewhere. But Christianity is moving out over all the earth with steadily increasing power, with ever-multiplying agencies, with ever-enlarged devotion, and with open and undiscourageable purpose to conquer the world." — *Robert E. Speer.*

III. THE STONING OF PAUL, vs. 19-28. 19. But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium. Nothing is more implacable than religious bigotry. These Jews were not content to have driven the missionaries from two cities, but must follow them up as far as they went, and drive them quite out of the country. **And having persuaded the multitudes.** Paul and Barnabas were regarded by these Jews to be false to the Jewish faith, heretics, traitors to Judaism and its sacred traditions; for were they not consorting with the heathen and taking them into the sacred enclosure of the Jewish religion? These charges, however, would have no weight whatever with the Greeks of Lystra among whom the missionaries were now working, and who were thoroughly convinced of the reality of the miraculous healing of the cripple. These Jews must therefore have persuaded the Lystrians that Paul and Barnabas were in league with the devil, and working miracles through evil powers in order to bring the Lystrians within their control for harmful purposes. Superstition is still more easily roused to fear and anger than to admiration and reverence, and the crafty Jews would have no difficulty in persuading the multitudes, especially as they would consider that Paul and Barnabas had affronted them in refusing their worship. **They stoned Paul.** The Jews headed the mob, and chose their national form of punishment. Paul himself records this terrible experience (2 Cor. 11: 25) as the only stoning he suffered. Indeed, he could hardly have escaped a second stoning, as the purpose of the punishment was to kill, and his enemies threw with deadly intent. It was a barbarous infliction, indicative of the low order of civilization to which men had attained. Christianity, when life is justly forfeited to society, has substituted painless and instantaneous forms of death, by electricity or by lethal gas. Why was not Barnabas also stoned? Perhaps he was in another part of the city. Perhaps Paul was singled out as the leader, Barnabas being a milder man and not arousing antagonisms by vigorously pressing home the truth. When Dr. Francis E. Clark visited the ruins of Lystra he found the modern Lystrians as savage as those of old, and was pelted with snowballs and stones as being a hated Christian. **And dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.** Paul had fainted under the fearful shock of the blows, and lay beneath the heap of stones apparently lifeless. If it had been a Jewish city, the stoning must have taken place outside the walls; as it was, probably it took place in the market square where Paul had been preaching.

20. But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city. Young Timothy was probably among these disciples, he who afterward became Paul's beloved assistant. Probably his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice were there. Barnabas by that time had certainly reached the scene. It was a weeping company. They were planning where to bury the bruised body of their dear leader. His recovery would seem miraculous, and probably it was. He must have reentered the city in the dusk, shielded by the company of disciples. Never again would that little group doubt the protecting power of Jesus Christ. **And on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.** Very likely he spent the night in Timothy's home, his gaping wounds tenderly cared for by Lois and Eunice. It is hard to see how, without a miracle, his stiff and battered body could have made the journey of from twenty to thirty-five miles eastward to Derbe, the site of which is

in doubt. Perhaps an animal was obtained to carry him, but in any event it must have been an excruciating experience.

THE RETURN FROM DERBE. The apostles must have spent some time in Derbe, where they were not molested by Jews or Greeks. They won many to the cause of Christ, among them probably being that "Gaius of Derbe" (Acts 20 : 4) who went with Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem.

At Derbe Paul was not far from his home in Tarsus, but he may have tarried in Derbe till snow had rendered the mountain passes to the east of Derbe impassable. At any rate, the apostles felt the urgent need of returning over the ground they had already evangelized in order to confirm the faith of their converts and strengthen them to meet threatening persecution. The Jews, their enemies, probably believed Paul to have been killed. There may have been a new election of magistrates. On their return they probably took extreme precautions for safety, and did no public preaching. But in any case it was a perilous journey, exhibiting heroic bravery on the part of Paul and Barnabas, and showing their strong feeling of the necessity for church organization, for Christian instruction, and for brotherly encouragement. So the apostles retraced their steps : Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and Perga, preaching this time in the last-named town, where they did not preach at first, and finding a ship for Antioch of Syria at the historic port of Attalia (modern Adalia).

REPORTING AT ANTIOCH. Antioch of Syria may be called the home church of foreign missions, and its members the home board. To them Paul made his report after each missionary journey : and it must have been each time a thrilling occasion, as every missionary report is to a discerning mind. What a story Paul and Barnabas had to tell ! Trusting in the grace of God, they had set forth on an unexampled task, which they had now fulfilled. They had travelled very far, for those days, and had seen strange lands and cities. They had faced many perils and had barely escaped with their lives. They had won Jews to Christ ; but, more than that, they had taken the great step of "opening the door of faith" to the Gentiles. All of this these two superb men told to an assembly which included, we may be sure, every member of the Antioch church who could possibly come. They established that day one of the most valuable of Christian customs, that of reporting concerning every task on which one may be sent.

PERILS OF MODERN MISSIONARIES. The physical hardships of modern missionary life have been much lessened by modern science and by the work of many predecessors. But still horrible diseases must often be faced, vile conditions of living, swarming vermin, deadly serpents, wild beasts, and still more savage men. Malaria and swiftly fatal fevers lurk in many regions. But these perils are as nothing compared with the missionaries' loneliness, the awful homesickness, the absence of the sustaining force of Christian surroundings, the low standards all round them, the weary monotony of heathen life, the sad separation from children, the necessity of looking upon disease and great need which cannot be relieved, the constant contact with the most debasing and vile forms of sin, and the suffocating sense of the vast spiritual darkness and sadness all around, only a small part of which the missionary is able to relieve. "Nothing in the missionary life is harder than this last for the man or the woman who has gone to the foreign field from true missionary motives. It is akin to the strain that broke Christ's heart in three years ; for it was this that killed him, and not the nails or the spear." — *Condensed from Rev. Arthur J. Brown, D.D.* Every missionary should know that the Christians at home are praying for him, should be cheered by many letters, and should be supported by all the resources for his great work that we can give him.

LESSON VII. — August 12.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM. — Acts 15: 1-35; Galatians 5: 1-15.

PRINT Acts 15: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* — JOHN 8: 36.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 133.

Primary Topic : GOD'S CHILDREN REFUSE TO QUARREL.

Lesson Material : Acts 15 : 1-35 ; Gal. 5 : 1-15. Print Acts 15 : 1-11.

Memory Verse : By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13 : 35.

Junior Topic : CHRISTIANS CONSULTING TOGETHER.

Lesson Material : Acts 15 : 1-35 ; Gal. 5 : 1-15. Print Acts 15 : 1-11.

Memory Verse : John 13 : 35.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL OPPOSES RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL STANDS FOR CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will find this a very practical lesson if their thoughts are turned toward the way to settle the disputes which they themselves are likely to have one with another. Imagine some such quarrel—over invitations to a party, for instance, some being excluded; apply to the dispute the principles illustrated by the Jerusalem council.

The Older Classes will bring the principles of this lesson to bear on many of the controverted points in modern life, such as the debate between Fundamentalists and Modernists, that between the open shop and the closed shop, between labor and capital, between hand worker and head worker, between friends and opponents of the League of Nations and the World Court.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
Would it be well to establish in our town a forum for the open discussion of public questions ?

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

James the brother of our Lord.
What is known about the close of Peter's life.
Cases of compromise in the Bible.
Bible instances of conferences.
The council in modern religious life.
Christian principles in controversies.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Council, A.D. 50.

Place. — Jerusalem.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : How Christians May Settle Difficulties.

I. HOW THE DIFFICULTY AROSE, Acts 15 : 1-5.

The Judæan critics.
The deputation to Jerusalem.
The report of the opposition.
The value of talking things over.

II. PETER SPEAKS FOR LIBERTY, Acts 15 : 6-11.

The council assembled.
Peter's testimony.
Saved through grace of the Lord Jesus.
Christ the bond of union.

III. JAMES SOLVES THE PROBLEM, Acts 15 : 12-35 ; Gal. 5 : 1-15.

James's compromise.
Putting it in writing.
The return deputation.
Love and liberty (Gal. 5 : 1-15).

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Perowne on *Galatians* in *The Cambridge Bible*.
Parker's *People's Bible*. Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture*. Burrell's *The Unaccountable Man*.
Pierce in *Monday Club Sermons*, 1921.

15. And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, *saying*, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

I. HOW THE DIFFICULTY AROSE, Acts 15 : 1-5. THE JUDÆAN CRITICS.
1. And certain men came down from Judæa. "Down" because Jerusalem was regarded as the summit of Jewish authority and the temple hill as the center and source of revealed religion. These Christian Jews who came to Antioch probably had no commission from the Jerusalem church, but the mere fact that they came from headquarters gave their words weight. And taught the brethren, *saying*, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. The one central rite which separated Jews from other races and religions was that of circumcision. Circumcision had come to stand to the Jew for purity, for holiness, for freedom from the vileness attending the other religions. There was historical soundness in this view, only the Jews failed to see that the same ends could be gained in other ways, the ways of Christian liberty and brotherhood. Hence the great controversy which we are to study in this lesson.

2. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them. There was no quarrel, and the Greek nouns do not imply anger. There was

2. And when Paul and Bär'-nă-bās had no small dissension and questioning with them, *the brethren* appointed that Paul and Bär'-nă-bās, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3. They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phœ-nī'-çi-ā and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them.

only a manly difference of opinion, each side standing honestly and vigorously for what it regarded as the truth, Paul and Barnabas being leaders on the side of Christian liberty because of the large experience they had had of the capacity of the Gentiles to enter into the finest religious life and attain the noblest Christian character without passing through the narrow gate of the exclusive Jewish rites. *The brethren* appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. The delegates were selected from the entire church in Antioch and by the entire membership; it was a representative commission, for its conclusions would affect every family in the church. It was inevitable that Paul and Barnabas, the leaders in the admission of the Gentile Christians, should lead the commission. Of those that went with them we know the name of Titus alone (Gal. 2:3), that noble young man who afterwards became one of Paul's best helpers and the recipient of an Epistle from him. He was taken along as a fine sample of Gentile Christians who had not been circumcised. Of the apostles, we know that Peter, James, and John were in Jerusalem at this time, and they probably continued to reside there (Gal. 1:18, 19; 2:9). The elders were heads of families, and other persons of special influence and authority in the church.

3. *They therefore, being brought on their way by the church.* It was a common custom in the East for those who were to remain behind to accompany travellers a little distance on their way, "seeing them off." Thus Abraham attended his angelic visitants (Gen. 18:16), and Ruth and Orpah went a little way with Naomi (and Ruth went all the way), and thus Paul was attended by the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:38) and by disciples from Cæsarea (Acts 21:16). *Passed through both Phœnicia and Samaria.* They did not take ship but journeyed by land, and probably on foot, perhaps with an animal carrying their luggage. In Phœnicia they travelled along the coast, through Berytus, Tyre, and Sidon, visiting the Christians who had taken refuge there during the persecutions in Jerusalem. Then, swinging inland to Samaria, they journeyed through a country ill disposed toward Jews, but the gospel had been preached there very early in Christian history, Acts 8:4-25. *Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles.* "Declaring" means in the Greek "giving a full account." The winning of Gentiles to Christianity would be a matter of great interest to the Jews and the Jewish Christians. They had heard vague reports of it, and were deeply interested to learn the details. *And they caused great joy unto all the brethren.* These Christians were more liberal than those of Jerusalem. They knew more about the Gentiles, being in closer contact with them. Moreover, their own sufferings, for they had been exiled by persecution, had made their hearts more sympathetic and tender. Those to whom Christ means the most are the most eager that the blessings of his love shall be spread as far as possible.

4. *And when they were come to Jerusalem.* It was a long and toilsome journey, broken, however, by many stops and much kindly hospitality. *They were received of the church and the apostles and the elders.* Quite aside from the importance of their errand, Paul and Barnabas were distinguished Christian leaders, who had amply proved their worth and their ability. What a glorious reception they would have to-day wherever they might go! *And they rehearsed all things that God had done with them.* They would touch lightly upon their hardships and not at all upon their heroism. They would make much of the divine protection, deliverance from perils seen and unseen. The greater part of their report would deal with the reception of the story of Christ by men of strange tongues and foreign ways, by heathen idolaters, who yet had come to love their Saviour, accept his forgiveness, and enter his service exactly as had the Jews to whom Paul and Barnabas were speaking, no less

5. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

fully than Peter or John or James. It was a stirring recital, but no more stirring than the tale that is told by every returned missionary to-day.

5. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed. That it was possible to win to Christianity even men of the strict and stern Pharisaic sect is



Jerusalem.

In the time of the Apostles.

proved by the case of Paul himself ; but nothing short of a vision of the risen Christ in blinding light sufficed to convert Paul, and we may well believe that the Christianized Pharisees were few in the early church. They would be influential, however, both because of their native force of character and the honor in which they were held by the people because of their loyalty to Moses and their fierce patriotism. These people would be attracted to the purity of Christianity, and especially to its Messianic teachings based so strongly on the ancient prophets ; but they would be offended, in many cases, by its breadth and what they would call the softness of its teachings of love to all mankind. **Saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.** These Pharisees would uphold their position by citing

6. And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter.

7. And when there had been much questioning, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

especially the passages from the Pentateuch in which Moses required every male child to be circumcised. From their viewpoint the arguments were unanswerable, for they had not yet grasped the fact that Christ had brought into the world a New Covenant which supplanted the Old, that henceforth the valid and necessary circumcision was that of the dedicated soul.

THE VALUE OF TALKING THINGS OVER. Differences of opinion speedily lead to great schisms unless the men on both sides meet and talk things over fully and frankly. In this debate of the early church "we have seen how high the controversy ran; there was no small dissension and disputing; every man thought he saw the truth and knew it, and sometimes the dust was so vast and thick that we could scarcely tell how the fight was going. In the fact that there was full discussion of the question, let us recognize the place of human thought and human independence in the considera-

tion of Christian problems. We may all speak; no man is to be put down who speaks upon a question sincerely; every man who is not speaking intelligently or sincerely will put himself down. I know of nothing in the record which would justify us in supposing that men were hooted down on whatever side they were speaking." — *Joseph Parker.*

II. PETER SPEAKS FOR LIBERTY, Acts 15: 6-11. THE COUNCIL ASSEMBLED. 6. And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter. It was the first church council, one of the most important gatherings in the history of Christianity. Small in numbers, it far exceeded in the splendor of its membership any other Christian assembly ever held. Think of it! Paul was there, and Peter, and John, and James. Barnabas was present, and Titus. It would seem that Luke was in the meeting, Mark was certainly with his uncle Barnabas, and if women were admitted, there would be Mary the mother of Jesus and Mary the mother of John Mark and Mary Magdalene. Possibly Lazarus of Bethany was there, with Mary and Martha. Peter and John would not be the only apostles present, perhaps Thomas was there, perhaps Philip, perhaps Andrew. It may be that by this time Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had joined themselves openly to the company of the Nazarenes. How precious would be a photograph of that council and a phonographic record of its words!

7. And when there had been much questioning, Peter rose up. The Pharisaic party did the questioning, we may be sure. They would inquire particularly into the lives of the Gentile Christians. Did they practise the required ablutions? Did they pray three times a day? Did they give tithes? Did they keep the Sabbath scrupulously? Were they good Jews in other respects, though uncircumcised? Their investigation would be minute and thorough. But

Peter brought in a different atmosphere. The sturdy fisherman, probably the oldest of the apostles, would be quite venerable by this time, a patriarchal figure, but still upright and vigorous, and possessing a keen countenance and a strong voice. His closeness to Jesus, his positive character, and the fact that Christ had singled him out for special honor on more than one occasion, would add to the reverence with



Peter and John. Dürer.

8. And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us;

9. And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

10. Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11. But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.

which he was regarded. And said unto them, Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. It was about nine years before this that Peter had seen the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven bearing creatures clean and unclean and had obeyed the command to go from Joppa to Cæsarea and incur ceremonial defilement by entering the house of the Gentile Cornelius, receiving him into the Christian church. He had up to that time been strict in his observance of the law of Moses, but he knew himself to be divinely led in that matter, and he was proud of being a pioneer in the great movement which Paul had described so powerfully. "This thing is of God," Peter virtually said, "and it is no innovation, but began long years ago."

8. And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness. Paul had been bearing witness to the reality and soundness of Gentile Christianity, but Peter brought forward a Witness infinitely greater, even Omniscience himself. Paul had only outward actions to adduce, but God could see into the souls of men and know of a certainty whether their religious professions were sincere or false. Giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the home of Cornelius was made manifest by the same signs that had proved his presence before in the assemblies of Christians, especially by the gift of tongues and by the outpouring of ecstatic praises to God (Acts 10: 44-47). We are not informed as to all details of this manifestation, but it was of a kind that separated it clearly from ordinary events, and absolutely convinced those that experienced it and witnessed it.

9. And he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Peter was remembering the great word of Jehovah to him on the housetop in Joppa, "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common" (Acts 10: 15). The Jew could never forget the essential foulness of heathenism, the uncleanness of idolatry. It was indeed filthy beyond our imagining, and is to this day. The intricate Pharisaic system of outward purifications had originally this high purpose, to keep the Jews clean in life and soul. But if by faith in the Saviour men's souls and lives were cleansed and kept clean, what need was there of ceremonial cleansing? Peter's chain of logic was unbreakable.

10. Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? "My yoke is easy," said Christ. A yoke is an instrument for bringing power to bear and getting work done, but any weight beyond what is necessary to this end is a terrible hindrance to work. Certain rules and regulations are necessary for righteous living, but the Pharisees in their zeal for purity had gone far beyond what was necessary, and their numberless prescriptions and proscriptions had become what Paul rightly called (Gal. 5: 1) "a yoke of bondage." Under it the Jewish people had been restless for generations.

11. But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they. Why did not Peter say, "We believe that they, the Gentiles, will be saved through Christ's grace, even as we have been"? Because he had already said that in verse 9. Now he goes on to state the universality of Christian freedom, the liberty of grace, as if he should say: "We are making no exception in favor of the Gentiles, we are not admitting them into the church on easy terms while we get in on harder and stricter terms. Gentiles, Jews, Christians, there is one law for all, one salvation for all, the same terms of grace for all. What we claim for the Greeks and Romans we claim also for ourselves." It is just what Peter had asserted on the day of Pentecost: "Neither is there any other name under heaven wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12).

CHRIST THE BOND OF UNION. "If church rulers had always been as open-eyed as this bishop in Jerusalem, and had been content if people were joined to Christ and parted from the world, what torrents of blood, what frowning walls of division, what scandals and partings of brethren would have been spared!" — *Alexander MacLaren*.

"These various believers were animated by a common spirit of life. Each might say, 'It is not I that live; Christ liveth in me.' Our Romanist friends have a proverb, 'Where the church is, there is Christ'; which, if reversed, is doubly true: 'Where Christ is, there is the church.' For Christ is the center of all; he is the beating heart, the throbbing pulse, the heaving breast, the glistening eye, the busy brain, the eager hand. It is obvious that churches which are thus animated must draw nearer to each other as they approach this living Center, as radiating beams of light converge on their way toward the sun." — *Rev. David J. Burrell, D.D.*

"Differences of opinion have been of inestimable value in the world's progress. Discussion breaks the cake of custom. Out of controversy the truth is ultimately more clearly revealed. But there is a point beyond which differences and separations are both fruitless and harmful; and there is no more heartening spectacle in the life of the church to-day than its effort to get together, to work in harmony, to co-operate in building God's kingdom." — *Rev. Jason Noble Pierce, D.D.*

III. JAMES SOLVES THE PROBLEM. Acts 15: 12-35; Gal. 5: 1-15. JAMES'S COMPROMISE. On the conclusion of Peter's strong address there was a thoughtful and impressive silence, which was broken by James. This was not, of course, James the apostle, the brother of John, for he was dead, the first martyr among the Twelve. Nor was it the son of Alphaeus, the other James in the apostolic band. Quite certainly it was James the Lord's brother (Gal. 1: 19), to whom Peter had sent word on his release from prison by the angel (Acts 12: 17). Christ's brothers had not believed in him during his lifetime, but were won to the Christian faith by his resurrection. This James became the bishop of the church in Jerusalem, and wrote "the gospel of common sense," the sagacious Epistle which bears his name. It is the tradition that the Jews took him to the pinnacle of the temple and threw him down when he refused to disown Christ. He was not killed by the awful fall, but a fuller mercifully despatched him with his club.

With the gravity and dignity befitting his position as head of the council, James summed up the testimony of Simon Peter, and quoted from the prophecy of Amos some sentences looking toward the admission of the Gentiles. Then James rendered an authoritative decision, which was a wise compromise between the two antagonistic positions. For the Gentiles, he decreed that they should not be required to be circumcised, but that four requirements should be laid upon them as they entered the Christian church:

1. They should abstain from the use of meat which had been previously offered up in heathen sacrifices. Such meat was frequently sold in the markets, and Gentiles would have no scruples against it, but it was an abomination to every Jew; and from now on the Christian Jews and Gentiles were to eat together in many brotherly feasts.

2. They were to abstain from fornication. The necessity for this rule is a sufficient comment on idolatry, for unchastity was a part of worship in every heathen temple, women for that unholy purpose being regularly provided, and all the sanctions of religion being thrown about the bestial practice. This is the case to this day in heathen lands.

3. 4. They were to abstain from the eating of blood, and, as a consequence, from the use of meat where the animals had been strangled and the blood thus retained, instead of the throat being cut and the blood drained away. Thus was an ancient hygienic measure embedded in the laws of Moses, most healthful in that hot climate and in the lack of clean surroundings in the raising of cattle. Strict Jews hold to this regulation to this day.

PUTTING IT IN WRITING. The assembly having agreed to James's proposal, the conclusions of their deliberations were put into the form of a letter to the Gentile Christians of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. It was a straightforward, brotherly document, so clear as to be unmistakable, and to set the disputed questions absolutely at rest. Many sad misunderstandings and quarrels arise from the lack of such writings. All agreements should be committed to paper, and each party to the agreement should have a duplicate copy. The principle applies to every form of Christian work, such as notices of meetings, instructions for committees, reports of

committees, constitutions and bylaws of societies, and the fundamental laws of churches. Not to do this, in this age of easy typing and duplicating, is inexcusable carelessness, and is doing the King's business in a slovenly way.

THE RETURN DEPUTATION. To make the settlement still more decisive, and to bring the Jerusalem and Antioch churches still closer together, the letter was sent to Antioch, not by Paul and Barnabas and the rest of their deputation, but by a committee of two from the Jerusalem church. These were prominent men named Judas Barsabbas and Silas, the latter of whom we are to hear of again. These were to carry the letter and also give its contents by word of mouth. This they did, and as they were themselves prophets, they added many Christian teachings and exhortations, bringing new life and a fine inspiration to the Antioch church. Such brotherly visitations should often be made among the churches of the same or different denominations, and also among the various church organizations and societies. It is a fine thing, for example, for a prayer meeting to appoint a committee to bear friendly greetings to a neighboring prayer meeting, and for a Sunday school to send several teachers and officers to visit a nearby Sunday school, bringing back many a bright plan to enrich the home work.

LOVE AND LIBERTY (Gal. 5:1-15). Paul's letter to the Galatians was written, in part at least, to the churches formed on his first missionary journey, in the course of which this question of the relation between the Gentile Christians and Judaism came up over and over. It was natural, therefore, that the matter of spiritual liberty should be treated in this Epistle, and Paul handles it in masterly fashion. He tells the Galatian Christians that Christ has set them free *for freedom*, and not that they should again "be entangled in a yoke of bondage" such as would be subservience to the multiplied restrictions of Pharisaism. He warns the Galatians that if they submit to be circumcised they thereby show that they trust in forms and rites for salvation rather than in Christ; they enter a realm of endless petty rules and regulations, any one of which, if broken, will mean the loss of salvation. But Christian liberty means largeness of life. It saves through faith in Christ and love to men. Let the Christian trust in nothing less than that.

But Paul goes farther, for in throwing aside Judaistic requirements the Christians were in danger of allowing their liberty to run to license. Paul tells them that Christianity does not mean lawlessness, but a higher law, the law of loving service. Freed from the Pharisees' "yoke of bondage," Christians will gladly assume another yoke, the yoke of brotherly love: "Through love be servants" — slaves — "one to another." Released from the ancient laws of ceremonialism, the Christian comes under the simple but imperative law of Christ which is summed up in the one requirement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

This is the way Paul must have preached when he returned from that memorable council in Jerusalem, and this is the way he interpreted its enfranchising decision to the Gentile and Jewish Christians of Antioch and of all the lands to which he afterwards went. It is an interpretation equally valid for the Christians of our land and of to-day.

LESSON VIII. — August 19.

PAUL CARRIES THE GOSPEL INTO EUROPE. — Acts 15:36—16:15:

15.

PRINT Acts 16:9-15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* — ACTS 16:9.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 60:1-6.

Primary Topic : PAUL'S WONDERFUL DREAM.

Lesson Material : Acts 15:36—16:15. Print Acts 16:9-15.

Memory Verse : Speak, Jehovah, for thy servant heareth. 1 Sam. 3:9 b.

Junior Topic : GOD CALLS PAUL TO WORK IN EUROPE.

Lesson Material : Acts 15:36—16:15. Print Acts 16:9-15.

Memory Verse : I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts

26:19. ¹¹

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PIONEERING IN EUROPE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL'S CALL TO EUROPE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be interested in following the fortune of young Mark ; use it as an illustration of the way one false step hinders a person in after life ; also of the wisdom of giving people a second chance. They will also be interested in the story of young Timothy, perhaps at this time hardly more than a boy. The wonder dream of the man of Macedonia, with the sweet story of Lydia, should be used to arouse an interest in missions.

The Older Classes have many important subjects to discuss : what Christians should do when they differ in opinion ; how to bring up children ; what to do when the way seems closed before us ; how to obtain guidance from above ; the best mode of evangelization ; the value of women in the church ; how to exercise Christian hospitality. Separate members of the class may be appointed to lead these various discussions.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What would have been the probable effect on the history of the world if Paul had remained in Asia for the rest of his life ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's second missionary journey was begun in the spring of A.D. 50.

Place. — From Antioch in a circuit of Syria and Cilicia ; thence westward, visiting Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, and other cities ; thence north-

ward to Troas and by sea to Neapolis, and then by land to Philippi.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Bible disputes between good men.
The character of Silas.
The character of Timothy.
Bible examples of providential guidance.
Visions in Paul's life and in the New Testament.
Missionary methods illustrated by Paul's work in Philippi.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul's Call to Europe.

I. THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY,

Acts 15:36—16:8.

The separation of Paul and Barnabas.
The call of Timothy.
Paul's way hemmed about.
Divine guidance.

II. THE MACEDONIAN CALL, Acts 16 :

9-12.

Paul's vision.
Paul's obedience.
From Troas to Philippi.
The world's need of Christ.

III. FIRST FRUITS IN EUROPE, Acts

16:13-15.

The meeting by the river.
The conversion of Lydia.
Conversion and service.
Missionary extension.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Stalker's *The Life of St. Paul*. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul*. Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul*. Sitterly's *Jerusalem to Rome*. Morrison's *The Return of the Angels*. Nicoll's *Sunday Evening*. Brown's *The Quest of Life*. Jones's *The Unfettered Word*. Banks's *Bible Soul-Winners* and *Hero Tales from Sacred Story*.

I. THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY, Acts 15:36—16:8. THE SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS. "In his first journey Paul may be said to have been only trying his wings ; for his course, adventurous though it was, only swept in a limited circle around his native province. In his second journey he performed a far more distant and perilous flight. Indeed, this journey was not only the greatest he achieved, but perhaps the most momentous recorded in the annals of the human race. In its issues it far outrivalled the expedition of Alexander the Great when he carried the arms and civilization of Greece into the heart of Asia, or that of Caesar when he landed on the shores of Britain, or even the voyage of Columbus when he discovered a new world. Yet, when he set out on it, he had no idea of the magnitude it was to assume or even the direction which it was to take." — *James Stalker*.

It was Paul and not Barnabas who made the move for the journey, but he planned, as a matter of course, to have Barnabas for his comrade. Barnabas, however, wished to take with them his nephew, John Mark, as they had on their first journey, and Paul emphatically refused. He could not forget that Mark had turned coward in Pamphylia and gone back to Jerusalem, leaving the older men to face dangers alone. When Paul and Barnabas returned and told their great story Mark saw what a terrible mistake he had made, and was bent on going with them the next time. His gentle uncle was glad to forgive him, and saw in him the promise of much usefulness ; but Paul was of sterner stuff. He would not jeopardize the important enterprise with a faint-hearted assistant. He insisted that Mark must prove himself in some work not vital to the success of Christianity.

There was a sharp dispute. The Greek word is that which has been taken over in English in the word "paroxysm." The two great missionaries parted, never to

work together again. Both were right, from different viewpoints. Barnabas took Mark and went off to work for Christ in his native Cyprus. Paul took Silas, the godly young delegate from the Jerusalem church who enjoyed the work in Antioch so much that he did not return to Jerusalem with his companion delegates (Acts 15 : 34). Thus there were two missionary journeys instead of one. A similar event occurred in the beginnings of the foreign missionary enterprise in America. When the pioneer missionaries, "the Haystack missionaries," set out for India under the auspices of the American Board, one of their number was Adoniram Judson, who on the long voyage, studying into the matter, adopted Baptist views, and separated from his companions, going on to Burma while they went to India. Thus was inaugurated the great work of American Baptist foreign missions, thus a second great missionary board was formed, and thus once more the Lord brought abounding good out of apparent evil.

The estrangement between Paul and Barnabas was not permanent ; their souls were too large for that. Paul refers to Barnabas several times, in three letters. As to Mark, he proved himself with Barnabas and then became the helper of Peter, who probably dictated to him the second Gospel. Paul came to recognize his worth, and in Philemon 24 called him a "fellow worker," while in 2 Tim. 4 : 11 he asked Timothy to bring Mark with him to Rome, adding, "for he is useful to me for ministering," the very work which he had abandoned in Pamphylia.

THE CALL OF TIMOTHY. Paul was an establisher as well as a starter. Before he set out on his journey proper, he and Silas made a tour of the churches in Syria and Cilicia, "confirming" them. He taught them new truths, he corrected errors, he completed organization, he made converts. Until all was well behind him, he would not push forward.

It was his plan (Acts 15 : 36) to revisit all the cities where he had preached on the first journey, and see how the new Christians were getting along : what progress they were making in Christian life and how they were standing the persecution that was sure to arise. This time he went directly westward from Cilicia into the interior of Asia Minor, reversing his former course.

North of Tarsus the Taurus Mountains are pierced by the famous pass known as the Cilician Gates. To-day Paul could go by railway, but then he was obliged to traverse this pass if he would select the best way. It is "a narrow gorge under frowning cliffs of limestone, clothed here and there with pine and cedar, which to the Crusaders presented an appearance so terrible that they christened it the Gates of Judas." — *F. W. Farrar*. "The scenery in this region is grand and inspiring beyond description. Snow-clad mountains glistening in the brilliant sunshine tower on every side. Streamlets dash from the mountain declivities 'as the water comes down at Lodore,' and the air is pure and fresh as the sparkling streamlets." — *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D.*

Paul and Silas came first to Derbe and then went on to Lystra, where on his first visit the people had tried to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas as gods and where later Paul had been stoned. Here Paul's little party gained a notable addition in Timothy, a noble young man who from that time became to Paul as a dearly loved son (1 Tim. 1 : 18 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 2). Timothy enjoyed a fine reputation both in Lystra and in the neighboring city of Iconium. He had probably learned of Christianity at Paul's former visit. His mother was a Jewess named Eunice, who, with his grandmother Lois, were women of "unfeigned faith" (2 Tim. 1 : 5), who had brought up the boy in the knowledge of the Bible (2 Tim. 3 : 14, 15). His father was a Greek, and probably had died before this time. Since Timothy's mother was a Jew, all Jews would regard the young man also as a Jew rather than a Greek like his father, and would expect him to be circumcised. Paul therefore had him undergo that rite, so that his work among the Jews might not be hindered ; as to Gentile Christians, however, Paul held stoutly to the Jerusalem decision (Acts 16 : 4) excusing the Gentiles from circumcision. With the help of Timothy, therefore, Paul and Silas labored most successfully throughout the great interior province of Phrygia and Galatia, strengthening the churches in the Christian faith and every day adding to the numbers of Christians.

PAUL'S WAY HEMMED ABOUT. "Asia," as known to the Romans and to the writers of the New Testament, was the Roman province of that name, consisting only of the western seaboard of what we call Asia Minor, the three countries of Mysia (on the north), Lydia, and Caria. "Doubtless Paul felt that Asia, and particularly its famous capital, Ephesus, was to be the scene of his activities for years to come.

9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Măç-ě-dō'-nĭ-ă standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Măç-ě-dō'-nĭ-ă, and help us.

It was his intention to cross it from the highlands to the coast, preaching in city after city along the great south road until he came to Ephesus, which metropolis had been in his thought as a possible goal on his first foreign tour. At the first favorable point, however, where he decided with Silas that they might wisely begin their work, the Holy Spirit peremptorily forbade any preaching at all anywhere in Asia and yet seemed to sanction their further advance. Turning northward, they planned to make for the next province, Bithynia, and after days of travel, just as they were about to enter it, again the Spirit thwarts their designs and drives them straight west to the Ægean Sea. They cross Mysia, a district of Asia where still they dare not preach, and come out at Troas, just south of the Dardanelles." — *Prof. Charles Fremont Sitterly.*

It is thrilling to think of Paul, one of the greatest men of all the ages, reaching Troas, which lay just below the little hill where Homer's Troy, the Troy of the *Iliad*, was situated. The city was the ninth on that site. Centuries before Priam the location had been found strategic, at the very focus where Europe and Asia met. Laid in ruins eight times, as conquering armies passed over it, Troy rose ever from its ashes, invincible in beauty and power. "We are told that Julius Cæsar, when at the height of his power, intended to fix his capital at Troy and from that point rule both East and West, embracing the whole world in his kingdom. It had not reached its noblest estate in St. Paul's time, at least as a Roman city, but it was a great and growing metropolis, just such a city as the apostle loved to use as a center for his gospel propaganda. Even to-day the traveller in Troas finds many signs of its former glory. It was evidently a granite city like modern Aberdeen, though most of its granite pillars have been carried off, either by Mohammedans or Christians, for their building operations during the last fifteen hundred years." — *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D., LL.D.*

DIVINE GUIDANCE. "Paul was checkmated, and yet he won the game. He was thwarted, and it led him to his crown. Eager to advance with his good news, there rose before him the divine 'No Thoroughfare.' And yet that hour when he was hindered so was the hour when God was honoring him wonderfully, and leading him to such a mighty service as at his highest he had never dreamed of." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* Dr. Morrison goes on to show how very often it is better for us that our childish dreams should be baffled, our maturer hopes frustrated, our attempts at self-expression thwarted, our desire for rest denied, the cravings of our heart never granted. "God blocks our way when we would settle here, and urges us mightily to the beyond." "Heaven is our home."

"We assayed to go into Bithynia," that is all we are able to say. 'But the Kind Spirit suffered us not.' When we can say that, the sting is drawn from the pain." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will.' God knew what he was doing when by the force of circumstances and by the action of his own Spirit on the hearts of men he caused those first fresh impulses of Christian zeal to move north and west rather than to the south and east. They moved in the direction where empire lay. They took the route which enabled them to enlist under the banner of Christ the ruling forces in human affairs in that day and in modern civilization. It was all done in fulfilment of that vaster plan, too far-reaching for immediate comprehension by these men who saw their little plans for Bithynia go down in defeat. In every hour of dark uncertainty, remember that! In every such hour look up and say, 'God reigns, let the people rejoice.'" — *Dean Charles R. Brown.*

"We do not really believe in the living and present God if we only believe that he is in *some* of the events of life. We only really believe in the living God when we believe he is present in *all*." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

II. THE MACEDONIAN CALL, Acts 16:9-12. PAUL'S VISION. 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. The Acts is full of visions: that to Ananias, Acts 9:10-16; that to Cornelius in Cæsarea, Acts 10:1-6; that to Peter on the housetop in Joppa, Acts 10:9-16; this vision to Paul; another to Paul in Corinth, Acts 18:9, 10; another to Paul on shipboard, Acts 27:23, 24. It was even as Peter, in his sermon at Pentecost, had said it would be, quoting from the prophet

10. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Măç-ě-dō'-nĭ-ă, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

11. Setting sail therefore from Trō'-ăs, we made a straight course to Săm'-ō-thrăce, and the day following to Nĕ-ăp'-ō-lĭs;

12. And from thence to Phĭ-lĭp'-pĭ, which is a city of Măç-ě-dō'-nĭ-ă, the first of the district, a *Roman* colony : and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

Joel (Acts 2 : 17) : " Your young men shall see visions." In the quiet of the night men's minds are clear, and God often speaks most definitely to his children in the hours of darkness. **There was a man of Macedonia standing.** He disclosed himself as from Macedonia by his petition. Macedonia was the portion of Greece lying north of Achaia. It was the home land of Alexander. During the World War it was the scene of very important events. It was the country nearest Troas across the Ægean Sea. It is thought that Luke himself, the writer of the third Gospel and of the Acts, Paul's physician, was from Macedonia, probably from Philippi, and that he had been urging Paul to visit his country, but Paul had been waiting for a divine intimation. In that case Luke was the " man of Macedonia." **Beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.** A man's dreams are an index to his character. Paul must have been a most helpful man when even his dreams were of helping people. That sense of the world's great need was what made him the great missionary he was.

10. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia. There was no debating, no evasion, no tarrying, but immediately, as soon as the will of God was made known, these true followers of Christ made haste to carry it out. They probably could not go at once, for ships for Macedonia would not sail every day ; but they *sought* to go, made inquiries about ships, and took the first available opportunity. In this they set all Christians a noble example. Note that " *we sought*." This is the first of the " *we* " passages in the Acts, showing that Luke, the writer of the book, is at that point relating experiences in which he himself shared. He evidently joined Paul's party at Troas, being in the city either permanently or on a visit. **Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.** " *Concluding* " represents a Greek word implying careful thought. They did not jump at conclusions, but made up their minds in view of all the circumstances. Observe also the way these early Christians summed up their work : when called to go and help the Macedonians, they decided to preach the gospel to them. They knew that, whatever the need, nothing meets it like the good news of salvation which Christ brought to the world.

11. Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace. Samothrace is an island in the northern Ægean opposite the mouth of the Hebrus in Thrace. It is a very high island and so serves as a landmark for sailors. **And the day following to Neapolis.** " *Neapolis* " means Newtown, Newton. It is the seaport of Philippi, and is probably the town now called Kavalla. Paul had journeyed about 140 miles from Troas.

12. And from thence to Philippi. This city was about ten miles inland from Neapolis. It was named from Philip, king of Macedonia and father of Alexander the Great, who founded it. Philippi was famous for the rich gold mines near by, and was, like Troas, a cosmopolitan meeting-place of East and West, just the spot for Paul to begin his preaching in Europe. Philippi is now a city of graveyards, a place of ruins, only a few rude stone huts remaining, with a single massive ruin supposed to have been the governor's palace. **Which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony.** Philippi was the chief city in that part of Macedonia, though Amphipolis was the capital. By the battle of Philippi, in which the Imperialists, Octavius Cæsar and Mark Antony, defeated the Republicans under Cassius and Brutus, Augustus was made emperor of Rome. As a mark of gratitude, in A.D. 42 he made the city a Roman " colony." The " colonists " marched out from Rome like an army with banners, and, settling in Philippi, set up there a miniature Rome, maintaining their Roman citizenship, using the Roman coins and the Latin language, and accepting chief magistrates sent out from the mother city. **And we were in this city tarrying certain days.** They wisely took " the lay of the land "

13. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14. And a certain woman named Lȳd'-i-ā, a seller of purple, of the city of Thȳ-ā-ti'-rā, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

before attempting definite evangelizing, staying at some inn, looking around, making acquaintances, noting customs, discovering the best ways of approaching the people.

THE WORLD'S NEED OF CHRIST. "A gentleman saw an old man, diseased and worn and literally clothed in rags, who sat by the wayside, an object of pity; yet he never uttered a word, but simply sat there. The gentleman was struck by his abject misery, but as no appeal was made he passed on. Yet, haunted by the man's weebegone appearance, he came back and asked, 'Are you in want?' and the old man replied, 'O sir! I am sick and cold and hungry.' 'Then,' said the gentleman, 'why don't you beg?' And the old man, stretching out his worn, wasted hands and looking at his rag-covered body, said, 'Sir, I am begging with a thousand tongues.' His misery was begging more eloquently than words. And so Macedonia, which in fact knew nothing about Paul at all, and was entirely unconscious of its great need of Christ or that there was a Christ, by its very unconscious want appealed to Paul and brought him to offer help." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

So the great silent world that is without Christ begs with a thousand tongues. Its awful poverty, its unutterable wretchedness, its sickness, plagues, blindness, leprosy, its filth, its ignorance, superstition, and abject fear, its absolute hopelessness, — all of these cry out to us, "Come and help." We, who have in our possession the abundant cure for all their woe, shall we not leap with Paul to take it to them?

III. FIRST FRUITS IN EUROPE, Acts 16:13-15. THE MEETING BY THE RIVER. 13. And on the sabbath day. The Sabbath day is honored by the great fact that the foreign missionary enterprise was inaugurated on that day. **We went forth without the gate by a river side.** This river was the Gangites, a branch of the Strymon, flowing across the historic plain a mile west of the city gate. **Where we supposed there was a place of prayer.** A "prayer-place" was usually a simple enclosure open to the sky, though the term is occasionally used of a synagogue. Such a prayer-place was used by the Jews where, as seemingly here, there were too few Jews to erect and maintain a synagogue. It was usually placed on the bank of a stream where water could conveniently be obtained for the ablutions of which the Jews made so much. Paul and his companions, while surveying the city and surroundings, had made a note of this enclosure. **And we sat down.** Jewish teachers taught sitting down, not standing. **And spake unto the women that were come together.** It was a *man* of Macedonia who had called the apostles to Europe, but when they arrive they find only *women*! Evidently there were few Jews in Philippi, and probably most of these women were Gentile proselytes to Judaism. Christianity has always honored women, and rejoiced in the accession of women to the church. By Christianity the position of women has been improved in every way, and in return women have equalled if they have not excelled men in devotion to the church and activity in promoting Christianity.

14. And a certain woman named Lydia. She may have been named Lydia by her parents, or she may have been so called because she came from the province of Lydia in Asia Minor. **A seller of purple.** Cloth dyed purple, greatly admired by the ancients. A famous purple dye was obtained by the Phœnicians from a small gland in a marine mollusk, various species of *Murex* and *Purpura*. Lydia was probably a widow, perhaps continuing her husband's business, evidently a person of great energy and executive ability. **Of the city of Thyatira.** Thyatira was in Lydia, the central division of "Asia," the seacoast of Asia Minor. It was one of the "seven churches in Asia" to which John was commissioned to write (Rev. 2:18-29). It was famous for its dyes, and one of the inscriptions found there refers to "The Dyers' Guild." Lydia doubtless obtained from Thyatira the purple cloth which was her stock in trade. **One that worshipped God, heard us.** This description

asserts that Lydia was a proselyte to Judaism. Having already reached out and taken the best religion available, she was ready and eager for still more light. **Whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.** The Lord who had called Paul to preach in Philippi opened the heart of his first convert to receive his preaching. "Every call of God is an enablement." Unless the Lord opens the hearts of our pupils, we shall teach in vain.

15. And when she was baptized. Following Christ's command, the leaders of the church insisted upon baptism as the outward sign of separation from false religions and adherence to the true. **And her household.** She may have had children, she certainly had slaves, and she probably had a number of trade assistants; other dependents may have been added to these to make up the household. Such an establishment, loyal to its head, would be a unit easily influenced by the forceful Lydia, aided by Paul's persuasiveness. The chief influence, however, in bringing about genuine household religion, then as now, is the presence of Christ shedding his Spirit abroad in the home. Of all human experiences this is the happiest and the most fruitful of good. **She besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.** After Andrew and John had seen Jesus and heard him speak, they longed to hear more, and to that end begged to be allowed to lodge where he did (John 1: 38, 39). Lydia desired Paul and his comrades to dwell at her house for the same reason, that she might learn from them more about Jesus. She wanted no other reward for her fidelity to the Lord than this exalted privilege. It is indeed a rare honor to entertain in one's home one of the Lord's servants, though many fail to appreciate the vast gains of Christian hospitality. **And she constrained us.** This is a strong verb in the Greek, implying the overcoming of reluctance, for Paul was evidently unwilling thus to impose himself on her kindness. Through all his unselfish ministry he delighted in paying his own way, supporting himself (and probably his helpers) by his labor as a tentmaker. One of the many evidences that Luke wrote the Acts is the fact that this verb is found in the New Testament only twice, here, and in Luke 24: 29, where the two disciples of Emmaus were urging the risen Lord to remain with them for the evening meal.

MISSIONARY EXTENSION. Christ's ideal for his church was that it should go forth "into all the world" and bring all the world to the foot of the cross. But here nearly two thousand years have passed, and how far are we from reaching all the world with the gospel! We have been merely playing at missions. Missions should be the one aim of the Christian church.

"That very remarkable Christian woman who founded the society known as The King's Daughters one morning at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, was walking along the board walk by the seaside, and saw a little boy, a friend of hers, in a rowboat. He called to her, 'Mrs. Bottome, will you come in my boat for a row?' She shouted back, 'Yes, I believe I will.' She went down the steps to the landing-place, and the little fellow brought the boat up beside her. She stood firmly on one foot and touched the boat with the other. Now Mrs. Bottome was a woman with a full share of avoirdupois, and of course the boat went out and left her. Then she changed her position. She got on the other foot and touched the boat with the other toe, but away went the boat just the same. Then the little boy scratched his head in a puzzled way and said, 'Why don't you get in all of you?' And that is what we need. Too many are touching the life-boat for saving sinners with the toe, but holding on with all their might to the landing." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.* Paul, when he drew near the missionary ship, "got in all of him."

LESSON IX. — August 26.

PAUL IN A ROMAN PRISON. — Acts 16: 16-40.

PRINT vs. 19-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.* — PHIL. 4: 4.

Devotional Reading: Isa. 55: 6-13.

Primary Topic: PAUL IN JAIL.

Lesson Material: Acts 16: 16-40. Print verses 19-34.

Memory Verse: Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him. Ps. 145: 18 a.

Junior Topic : PAUL IN PRISON.

Lesson Material : Acts 16 : 16-40. Print verses 19-34.

Memory Verse : Ps. 145 : 18 a.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE SOURCE OF PAUL'S JOY.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL AS AN EVANGELIST.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will follow this dramatic story with great interest. After the teacher has gone over all the events, he may review by having different pupils imagine themselves the various characters of the lesson—the slave girl, an owner, a magistrate, the jailer, Lydia, Silas, one of the other prisoners—and tell the story from his viewpoint, in the first person.

The Older Classes will have many interesting topics to discuss, but should center on the great text which defines the conditions of salvation. Spend most of the time discussing the need of salvation, what belief on Christ involves, and why that belief results in salvation.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How can our Christian work be made to produce more conversions ?

Things of God. Parkhurst's *The Blind Man's Creed.* Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Vol. 7. *Shepherd's Men in the Making.* Church's *Village Sermons*, Vol. 1. Biedewolf's *Evangelistic Sermons.*

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

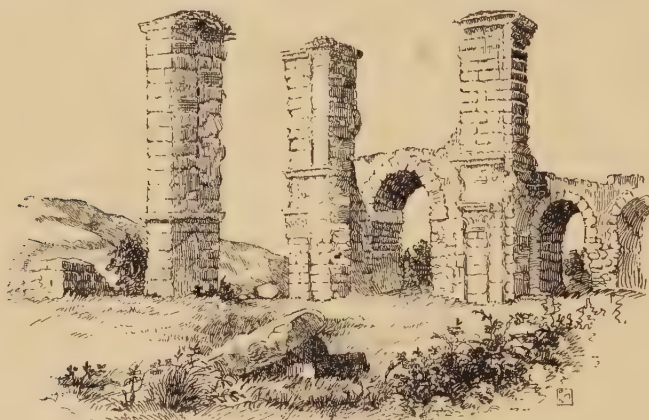
Ancient modes of fortune-telling.
Arbitrary features of ancient courts.
Horrors of ancient prisons.
Earthquakes throughout the Bible.
Principles of conversion.
Proofs of conversion.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul Praising and Preaching in Prison.

I. FREED BY AN EARTHQUAKE, vs. 16-26.

A slave girl cured.
Paul and Silas in court.
Paul and Silas in prison.
The great earthquake.
Finding Christ in misfortunes.



Ruins of an Old Marketplace of Philippi.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 50.

Place. — Philippi, the marketplace and the jail.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Baring-Gould's *A Study of St. Paul.* Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles.* Bird's *Paul of Tarsus.* Lee's *Eventful Nights in Bible History.* Work's *Every Day.* Morrison's *The Wind on the Heath.* Scofield's *In Many Pulpits.* Chapman's *Revival Sermons.* McKenzie's *Cambridge Sermons.* Stimson's *The New*

II. THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER, vs. 27-34.

The jailer's vital question.
Paul's complete answer.
The proof of conversion.
"What must I do to be saved?"

III. THE RELEASE OF THE APOSTLES, vs. 35-40.

Paul's dignified protest.
Paul's Roman citizenship.
Paul's leisurely departure.
Standing on one's rights.

I. FREED BY AN EARTHQUAKE, vs. 16-26. A SLAVE GIRL CURED. Paul and Silas, Timothy and Luke seem to have visited habitually the "place of prayer"

19. But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers,

20. And when they had brought them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21. And set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans.

22. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods.

where Lydia, the first Christian convert in Europe, was won to the Saviour. One day, as they were on their way thither, they encountered a poor, demented slave girl, whose strange, half-coherent utterances were used by her owners (she was valuable enough to be owned by a sort of stock company) as a species of fortune-telling. The credulous people would bring them their problems, which they would solve by interpreting the next insane cry of the demoniac. The poor girl, when she saw the missionaries, was attracted by their kind glances and noble countenances, and was moved in the same way as a number of demoniacs were affected toward Christ (Mark 1: 23-26; Luke 4: 41), following after them, and shouting that they were servants of the Most High God, proclaiming the way of salvation; for she had caught up some phrases of Paul's preaching. But Paul would not, any more than his Master, receive tribute and aid from demons, so in the name of Jesus Christ he bade the evil spirit come out of her, and in that very hour the slave girl was restored to her true self.

19. But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone. No more ravings, no more pretended oracles. Instead of rejoicing over the inestimable blessing that had come to the girl, these selfish men were enraged because they could no more make money out of her misfortune. Thus does greed always harden the hearts of men. They laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. Nothing is said of Timothy and Luke, for Paul and Silas were the active heads of the party, the spokesmen, and they alone were held responsible. The marketplace or forum of an ancient town was the heart of its life. Here, in the open air, the farmers sold their produce brought in from the fields about the town, here traders from afar offered their wares, here bankers dealt in money and securities, here clothes and other manufactured goods were displayed for sale, here philosophers and public teachers gave lessons and lectures, and here the courts held their sessions. Many of the ancient cities of the East and of Europe still have their marketplaces, and indeed there are few of the cities of America that do not possess both market-houses surrounded by large open spaces and also public squares maintaining at least some of the functions of the old-time forum.

20. And when they had brought them unto the magistrates. "These *strategoi* were the *duumviri*, the two *prætors* specially appointed to preside over the administration of justice, in cases where there was no appeal to Rome, in the *municipia* and *colonies* of the Romans. The title in the Greek seems to indicate somewhat of a military authority, which could administer summary punishment." — Prof. J. R. Lumby. They said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city. The fact that Paul and Silas were Jews had really nothing to do with the matter, but was craftily introduced by the complainants in order to arouse prejudice against the two missionaries; for the Jews, because of their religious pride and exclusiveness, were very unpopular among the Romans. Paul and Silas were charged with disturbance of the peace.

21. And set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans. The people of this Roman colony of Philippi were very proud of their close connection with the ruling city of the world, and anything which militated against their Roman status would be regarded with especial abhorrence. It is hard to see how Paul's teaching could be twisted into a semblance of sedition, unless he had referred to "the kingdom of God" so prominent in Christ's teachings, and to Jesus himself as the "King" of that spiritual realm. But, in any case, Christianity was a new religion, not recognized by Rome, or licensed to be taught and propagated.

22. And the multitude rose up together against them. It was a mob, with all of a mob's unreasoning passion and determined prejudices. And the magistrates rent

23. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely :

24. Who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them ;

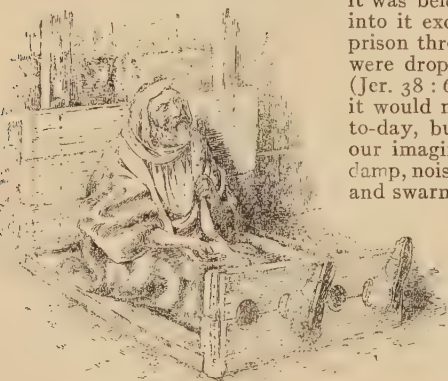
their garments off them. The garments of Paul and Silas ; the Greek implies that they were stripped naked. We have a chance here to be grateful for our courts of justice, where such arbitrary and brutal proceedings would be impossible. This differed not a whit in its spirit from a lynching ; and yet we say that the central word of Rome was Law ! **And commanded to beat them with rods.** A regular court officer was the *lictor*, who carried rods to be used for this purpose. Paul suffered this form of punishment three times (2 Cor. 11 : 25). It was a cruel infliction, cutting deep into the bleeding flesh, and often leaving the victim permanently maimed.

23. **And when they had laid many stripes upon them.** "The Jewish practice was to give forty less one (2 Cor. 11 : 24), but we do not know how many blows were given by these colonial Roman magistrates." — *Prof. George H. Gilbert*. Paul did not forget this terrible experience, but, months afterward, writing to the near-by Thessalonians, reminded them how he had "suffered before and been shamefully treated at Philippi" (1 Thess. 2 : 2). **They cast them into prison.** As it seemed to be an offence against the Roman government, the magistrates were eager to show their zeal by a doubly severe sentence. They evidently intended, however, to keep the missionaries in prison for only one night, to prevent their teaching further, and to send them out of the city the next morning : see verse 35. **Charging the jailor to keep them safely.** Jails were none too secure in those days ; and jailers, moreover, might easily be bribed. That such an injunction was necessary is a commentary on the efficiency of the ancient judicial system.

24. **Who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison.** The inner prison was back of the outer prison, with no exit except through it. Perhaps

it was below the outer prison, with no opening into it except a hole in the floor of the outer prison through which the unfortunate prisoners were dropped, as was the case with Jeremiah (Jer. 38 : 6). The outer prison was so vile that it would not be tolerated in any civilized land to-day, but the inner prison was foul beyond our imagining : no light, no fresh air, slimy, damp, noisome, full of the most disgusting odors, and swarming with vermin. It was the breeder

of disease and was in every way abominable. **And made their feet fast in the stocks.** The stocks consisted of two heavy planks, each plank notched so that when they were fastened together over the ankles holes were thus formed which held the legs, and were too small for the feet to be pulled through. Sometimes these holes were four or more in number so that the legs



A Prisoner in the Stocks.

could be stretched apart, producing extreme suffering.

25. **But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God.** The awful circumstances prevented sleep, but the missionaries could still pray and sing psalms ; their psalms were prayers, and at the same time praise. Many of the Psalms are most appropriate to the circumstances. The tense of the verb in the Greek implies repeated action : they had been singing the prayer Psalms for a long time. **And the prisoners were listening to them.** It must have been a novelty indeed, this voice of praise and prayer and song in that abode of misery. We may be sure, too, that the missionaries did not miss the opportunity of telling their fellow prisoners about their Saviour, who came "to proclaim release to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4 : 18, 21).

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed.

27. And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake. A fearful earthquake as the world's Redeemer hung dead upon the cross (Matt. 27: 50-54) testified to the sympathy of the created globe with its Creator. In the first days of the church, when Peter and John had been warned by the Sanhedrin not to preach or teach any longer in the name of Christ, the prayer meeting of the disciples which followed received God's witness in the form of an earthquake (Acts 4: 31). Luke himself felt the effects of the earthquake, though not in the prison, and knew that it was "great." **So that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken.** It was built of stone or possibly of brick on a stone foundation, and such buildings crumble easily in an earthquake. Structures most likely to resist earthquakes are those tied together laterally as well as vertically, like the bamboo buildings of the Pacific coast of Asia, or like our modern steel-frame edifices. **And immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed.** The rending of the stone or brick walls would twist the doors from their hinges and thrust loose their bolts. The prisoners' chains were fastened to staples in the walls, and these staples were loosened as the walls were cracked, and fell out, so that the prisoners were entirely free to leave the prison.

FINDING CHRIST IN MISFORTUNE. "In the melody of the imprisoned evangelists was verified the saying of the Patriarch Job, 'God, our Maker, giveth songs in the night.' There is no depth of sorrow in which his love cannot reach and cheer his servants. The Christian may be a prisoner in the chamber of sickness or a mourner in the house of death, a captive in the dungeon of the enemy or a bondman under the lash, whatever be the weight of the burden or the thickness of the gloom, God can infuse joy, and consolation, and peace, and hope, and sweet submission, and unwavering trust. Believers know not the resources of their holy religion, or the meaning of many precious promises, or the mighty power of God, or the all-sufficiency and love of Christ, until they are brought unto the place of darkness and into the deep. When tribulation aboundeth, then consolation also aboundeth by Christ." — *Bishop Alfred Lee.*

"It means much to the world to know how we bear our sorrow and endure our imprisonment. If we can raise a hymn out of our midnight, our song will carry to other listening prisoners and do them good." — *Rev. Edgar Whitaker Work, D.D.*

"When Sir Walter Scott was building Abbotsford, he put the bowling green in a peculiar place. And at one corner of it he built a little summer-house where he might sit of an evening after dinner. And he told Lockhart why he built it there; was it because the view was beautiful? not so, but that he might sit and listen there to the evening worship of his coachman." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

II. THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER, vs. 27-34. **THE JAILER'S VITAL QUESTION.** 27. And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open. The rocking earth, the sounds of falling objects, of rending and of crashing, filled him with confusion as he was roused from deep slumber. He was evidently sleeping in some room which overlooked the outer prison, and the first thing he beheld was the yawning gap where the doors had been. **Drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.** It was death for a jailer to let his prisoners escape; see Acts 12: 19, where the penalty was enforced after the angel had released Peter from the prison in Jerusalem; compare also Acts 27: 42, the soldiers desiring to kill their prisoners rather than run the risk of their escaping and so putting the lives of their guards in jeopardy. All of this makes still more unlikely the story told, for a bribe, by the soldiers that kept watch over Christ's grave (Matt. 28: 11-15). Christianity teaches that suicide is a cowardly death, but the great teachers of Greece and Rome saw nothing wrong in that mode of escape from difficulty, citing Cato as a most praiseworthy example. The jailer had his sword at hand ready to quell mutiny or disorder among the prisoners, or prevent an attempt at escape.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. The other prisoners were evidently too terrified to utilize their chance of escape.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29. And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas,

30. And brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.

32. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house.

Paul must have been in some position from which he could see the room in which the jailer was; Paul would be in the dark and the jailer's room was lighted, so that his grasping the sword and raising it against his breast was easily seen by the apostle.



Paul and Silas before the Jailer.

There was much confusion still, with many outcries, so that Paul needed to shout loudly to get the jailer's attention in time.

29. And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas.

The jailer probably knew of the miraculous cure of the demoniac slave girl, so closely connected with the incarceration of Paul and Silas. Instantly in his mind he connected the earthquake with the wonder-worker; their God, who was so powerful, was thus freeing them from prison. He fell down and worshipped them as the messengers of a god, perhaps as gods themselves.

30. And brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Paul and Silas had not run away when they could, so they might safely be brought out of the inner prison. "Sirs" is in the Greek a term of great honor, virtually "Lords." They had instantly risen to a most exalted position in the jailer's opinion.

But from what did he wish to be saved? His prisoners were there, so that his own life was safe. He must have become conscious of his personal sins. Perhaps the earthquake aroused his conscience. Perhaps he had heard Paul preach about the wages of sin, which are death. He may have heard the demoniac girl shouting after Paul and Silas, "These men proclaim the way of salvation." However it happened, the jailer asked the one question best worth asking by every man, and he asked it of the one man in all the world most capable of answering it wisely.

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. Here is the essence of Christianity. Here is all we need to know for our eternal happiness and safety. Peter at Pentecost made a very comprehensive answer to virtually the same question (Acts 2: 38), but, though his was a wonderful summary, Paul's simpler reply has the essentials. Every one can understand what believing on the Lord Jesus means: simply accepting what Christ says about himself and what he bids us do. All who do this will be saved from their sins.

32. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him. It was not long after midnight, in a troubled time, but Paul knew that "now is the acceptable time," that

33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately.

34. And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

the present hour is the only sure hour of salvation. The awful experience of the moving earth had proved the uncertainty of life and of all things terrestrial. Nothing is more important at any time than eternal salvation. In season and out of season, Paul believed in preaching the gospel. **With all that were in his house.** Here we have household religion again, as in the case of Lydia and that of Cornelius.

33. **And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes.** They had been thrust into the inner prison with their bleeding wounds uncared for, and with no means of caring for them themselves. **And was baptized, he and all his, immediately.** Here we see the earnestness of the jailer. He was a man of action. Having just had an impressive warning, he realized that there is no time like the present for the doing of any duty.

34. **And he brought them up into his house.** "Up" implies that the inner prison was underground, or else that the jailer's residence was on higher ground than the prison. **And set food before them.** He would be well aware that they had had nothing to eat since their exhausting experiences of the afternoon before, and, though it was still night (verse 35), as they were now his guests courtesy required that this omission should be remedied. The proof of a true conversion to Christ is Christlike deeds. **And rejoiced greatly, with all this house, having believed in God.** There is no real joy outside of Christianity. Christ's overmastering desire was that his disciples might possess his joy (John 17: 13). In spite of Paul's sufferings at Philippi, when he came to write to the Christians there he composed the Epistle of Joy: Phil. 1: 4, 18, 25; 2: 2, 17, 18, 28, 29; 3: 1; 4: 1, 4, 10.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?" We have all done, in thought and act, what a holy God cannot approve. And we all feel within ourselves the possibilities of evil beyond anything we have ever done; therefore there is something in us that needs to be saved." — *Rev. C. I. Scofield, D.D.*

"If you are not going forward in the way of God, you *must* be going backward. If you are not conquering your besetting sins, they are conquering you. If you are not pleasing God more and more, you are pleasing him — oh, dreadful thought! — less and less. Have you not to ask, 'What must I do to be saved?' — *Dean R. W. Church.*

"'What must I do?' Not what should I prefer to do; but what is it necessary that I should do?" — *Alexander McKenzie.*

"The answer to the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' means to do that thing which will put away from us consciously and deliberately whatever has shut us out from God, and, seeing that Jesus Christ has brought us to a knowledge of God otherwise unattainable, to trust and follow him." — *Rev. Henry A. Stimson, D.D.*

"Faith is receiving Christ into our emptiness. It is not the beauty of my pitcher, it is not even its cleanness that quenches my thirst: it is simply holding that pitcher to the place where water flows." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

A profligate young man in the Russian army "went from bad to worse. Completely discouraged, he was casting up his accounts, and, when the overwhelming sum was known, in great desperation he wrote at the bottom of the column these words, 'Who is to pay all this?' The Emperor of Russia, going through the barracks to inspect the soldiers, passed this young man, who, with his head in his arms, had fallen asleep. The emperor, glancing at the figures before him on the table, read the question, and then bending over wrote one word, 'Nicholas.' And the story goes that that one man was free. If you can enumerate all your sins from the earliest recollection to the present moment, and beneath the sum of them all write the question, 'Who is to pay all this?' there will be one Name written in answer to it." — *J. Wilbur Chapman.*

"Faith, in the ultimate sense, is an act of the will. I may believe the doctor is able to cure me. I show my faith in the doctor when I trust my case to his care." — *Rev. William E. Biederwolf, D.D.*

"To think that Christ is the Son of God is one thing; to *believe* on him in that character is another. The first is only an affair of the mind; the second is a personal

matter, and means getting into personal connection with him as the Son of God." — *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

"There is no escape from evil except through love of good." — *Rev. Ambrose Shepherd, D.D.*

III. THE RELEASE OF THE APOSTLES, vs. 35-40. PAUL'S DIGNIFIED PROTEST. "By next morning the prætors had come to the conclusion that they had done a very stupid thing, and had laid themselves open to a grave charge. No doubt that Lydia and her friends had represented the matter to them, and had insisted on the citizenship of Paul and Silvanus (Silas). Accordingly these magistrates, who knew as little of the law as many an English justice of the peace, were frightened, and sent to the prison to have Paul and his companion set free. But it did not suit Paul's plans to be smuggled out of the jail in that way. He saw clearly enough that he and Silas could not remain in Philippi, but he had made up his mind to leave his companions Luke and Timothy behind, and also to revisit the town himself as soon as possible. It was advisable, therefore, to let the magistrates feel what they had done, and give them a good wholesome lesson not to meddle unnecessarily and illegally. Paul said: 'They have beaten us openly, untried, being Roman citizens (and the *Lex Porcia* forbids the beating of citizens); they have cast us into the *Robur*, have put us in the stocks; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.'" — *Sabine Baring-Gould.*

PAUL'S ROMAN CITIZENSHIP. "Paul's father was a Roman citizen, and Paul was born into all the political privileges of the Roman state. What an advantage that was to him in all his apostolic career! He always was disposed to regard the imperial power as the friend of the Christian faith, protecting it from Jewish persecution and saving him again and again from danger to his person and life. He made the most of his Roman citizenship whenever necessity demanded the declaration of it. He usually claimed all of its privileges. He made the prætors at Philippi confess that they had acted illegally in scourging and imprisoning men who were Romans and uncondemned. He made them apologize in person before they set him free. When the chief captain here at Jerusalem would have stretched him upon the rack, thinking he was only a Jew who could be tortured into confession of some wrongdoing, Paul appealed to his exemption from that form of examination as a Roman citizen and uncondemned. As a Roman citizen he pleaded his own case before the Roman governors Felix and Festus, and he finally insisted upon his right as a Roman to appeal his case from their jurisdiction to the court of the emperor himself. In all probability he was the only one among the apostles who could have done such a thing. [Silas — see verse 38 — was a Roman citizen as well as Paul.] He was a Jew, but he also was a Roman; and that was a great advantage and distinction." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes.*

Why did not Paul assert their Roman citizenship in the marketplace before the magistrates, and so save himself and Silas from the scourging? He probably did, but his declaration was lost in the howls of the mob. Cicero (*In Verr.*, V., 62) tells of a prisoner who was pitilessly scourged while amid the blows he continually cried, *Civis Romanus sum.*

PAUL'S LEISURELY DEPARTURE. "The messengers hastened back to their masters with the message; and they had good reason to be afraid, for the determination of a Jew was well known. The magistrates lost no time in hastening through the streets to the jailer's house. It was their turn now to tremble. With grey eyes fixed upon them, Paul listened to the very humble apologies of the magistrates, who sat so proudly yesterday in their robes and chairs. With their own hands they brought them out to the street, asking them as a favor not to remain, but to leave the city at once. But Paul would give no promise, and with Silas by his side, their limbs stiff, their brown cloaks torn and ragged, but free Romans now, they went away through the streets to Lydia's house. It would be days, perhaps weeks, before they were fit to travel; and many came to see them, for Lydia's house had become the meeting-place of the Christians." — *Robert Bird.* We are not told what their teachings were, except that "they comforted them," seeking to bestow on them the same joy and courage which had enabled the apostles to praise God in song at midnight in the prison.

LESSON X. — September 2.

PAUL IN THESSALONICA. — Acts 17:1-15; Romans 15:18-20;
1 Thessalonians 5:12-23.

PRINT Acts 17:1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The opening of thy words giveth light.* — Ps. 119:130.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 119:9-16.

Primary Topic : PAUL FINDS NEW FRIENDS AND FOES.

Lesson Material : Acts 17:1-15; Rom. 15:18-20; 1 Thess. 5:12-23.

Print Acts 17:1-12.

Memory Verse : But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me. 2 Tim. 4:17.

Junior Topic : PAUL FINDS NEW FRIENDS AND FOES.

Lesson Material : Acts 17:1-15; Rom. 15:18-20; 1 Thess. 5:12-23.

Print Acts 17:1-12.

Memory Verse : 2 Tim. 4:17.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL'S USE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL, ORGANIZER OF CHURCHES.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes have to-day a lesson emphasizing the value of Bible study. Hold up before them the examples both of Paul in his preaching and the Bereans in their studying. Show them how to use their Bibles in studying their Sunday-school lessons. Praise the Bible as the most beautiful, influential, and helpful book in the world.

The Older Classes have here a lesson in church organization and church work, especially when the passages from Romans and 1 Thessalonians are included. View your own church in the light of the entire lesson. Hold it up alongside the Bible models and see wherein it needs improvement.

Question Suggested for Discussion: In what ways can we improve our Bible study and our methods of discussing the Sunday-school lessons?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The middle of the second missionary tour, A.D. 50-52.

Place. — Thessalonica; Berea, about forty-seven miles to the southwest; Athens, 250 Roman miles south of Berea by land.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul Establishing Churches.

I. PAUL IN THESSALONICA, Acts 17:1-9.

Paul preaching in the synagogue.
The assault on Jason.
Turning the world upside down.
Revolutionary religion.

II. PAUL IN BEREÆ, Acts 17:10-15.

The noble Bereans.
Searching the Scriptures.
Jewish mischief-makers.
Christian use of the Bible.

III. HOW PAUL PREACHED.

Fully preaching the gospel, Rom. 15:18-20.
Quench not the Spirit, 1 Thess. 5:12-23.



Triumphal Arch across the Main Street at Thessalonica,
Erected in honor of the victory of Octavius and Antony over Brutus and Cassius at Philippi.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The typical Jewish character.
Paul as a strategist.
Paul's little-known helpers.
Power radiating from Rome.
The character of the Bereans.
Religion based on the Bible.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Archbishop Benson's *Living Theology*. Service's *Sermons*. Talmage's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. Dawson's *Sermons on Disputed Points*. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Vol. 5. McHardy's *The Higher Powers of the Soul*. Storrs's *The Divine Origin of Christianity*. Horder's *The Supreme Argument for Christianity*. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Hansen's *Wandering Stars*.

1. Now when they had passed through Ām-phíp'-ō-lis and Apollonia, they came to Thēs-sā-lō-nī'-cā, where was a synagogue of the Jews:
2. And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures,

I. PAUL IN THESSALONICA. ACTS 17: 1-9. PAUL PREACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

1. Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia. These two cities were southwest of Philippi, the first about thirty-three miles distant, and the second about thirty miles farther on. Paul and Silas were travelling on the famous Egnatian road. Amphipolis means "around the city," and was so named because the river Strymon nearly surrounded it. The city was a great military station. The missionaries did not tarry in these towns, perhaps because they found no synagogue there as a basis of operations. **They came to Thessalonica.** This city, situated about thirty-seven miles west of Apollonia, was anciently called Therma, but was renamed Thessalonica ("Thessalian Victory") after a sister of Alexander the Great, who was so named because her father, Philip of Macedon, won a victory over Thessaly on the day he received news of her birth. To-day its name is contracted to Saloniki. Thessalonica was the capital of all Macedonia, or northern Greece. Placed at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, it enjoyed an extensive commerce. During the Middle Ages the city was one of the strongest of the Eastern centers of Christianity. The Saracens captured it in A.D. 904, the Crusaders took it back in 1184, and the Turks captured it in 1430, holding it until recent years, though missionary effort was powerful there, and Saloniki always contained many Christians, and an even larger number of Jews. **Where was a synagogue of the Jews.** The mention of this fact clearly implies that the reason for not stopping at Amphipolis and Apollonia was there were no synagogues there.



The Church in Which, according to Tradition, Paul Preached in Thessalonica.

2. And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them. We have noted this custom wherever Paul went, for Christianity sprang from Judaism, and, in spite of the persistent opposition of the more bigoted Jews, still found its readiest hearing and its first followers everywhere in the synagogues. Doubtless the visitors, according to Jewish custom, would be asked to speak in the synagogue, delivering whatever religious message might be on their hearts. **And for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures.** There were synagogue services on other days than the Sabbath, but more Jews would be present on the Sabbath than on the other days. Paul's references in Phil. 4: 16; 1 Thess. 1: 9 make it seem likely that the three Sabbaths do not measure his entire stay in Thessalonica. Note that Paul based his

3. Opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, *said he*, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ.

4. And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

preaching on *reason*. "Religion, if it is to have any profound and lasting effect, must address itself to the reason as well as to the other capacities of the mind of man. The religion of Jesus Christ welcomes the exercise of reason, quickens and develops the reason by the very grandeur of the truths it reveals, and gives the reason a loftier direction by the high and earnest spirit it enkindles." — *Rev. George McHardy, D.D.*

3. Opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer. Paul opened the meaning of Old Testament passages and alleged that they proved the necessity of the death and resurrection of the Messiah, in fulfilment of ancient prophecy. The Jews expected a Messiah who would reign as a glorious monarch, overcoming all the enemies of the Jews and extending their domain over all nations. Christ's own prediction of his coming death on the cross aroused the horror and dissent even of the disciples closest to him, and all through the early days of the church the cross was a "stumbling-block." It was long before the world learned to sing, "In the cross of Christ I glory." And to rise again from the dead. In proof that Christ must suffer Paul would use such passages as Isa. 52 : 13—53 : 12, and in proof that he must rise from the dead he would use such passages as Ps. 16 : 10. Without the resurrection, indeed, the preaching of the cross would be a proclamation merely of death and despair. It was Easter that transformed the crucifixion into glorious victory. And that this Jesus, whom, *said he*, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ. The use of the first person here shows that Luke is quoting Paul's very words, just as they were given to him for his record by the missionary himself; unless, indeed, Luke was in Thessalonica with Paul and did not stay behind in Philippi. But this is not one of the "we" passages. The sum and substance of Paul's preaching was that the man Jesus was the divine Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed. That fact sums up Christianity to this day.

4. And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas. It was not a matter merely of emotion, of feeling, but also of persuasion, reason, and thoughtful conviction, as all conversions should be. Being thus convinced, they cast in their lot with Paul and Silas, and let it be known that they were Christians. And of the devout Greeks a great multitude. Only "some" of the Jews, but "a great multitude" of the proselytes to Judaism from the heathen religions. And of the chief women not a few. As these are mentioned after "the devout Greeks," probably they also were Jewish proselytes. While at Thessalonica

Paul also made many converts from the ranks of idolaters (1 Thess. 1 : 9), but these would not be reached on the Sabbaths in the synagogue, but during the week; for Paul, all the time he could get from his labor on tent-making by which he earned his livelihood (1 Thess. 2 : 9), was, we may be sure, busily engaged in his work of winning men to the Lord Jesus.



5. But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Jā'-sōn, they sought to bring them forth to the people.

6. And when they found them not, they dragged Jā'-sōn and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7. Whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus.

5. But the Jews, being moved with jealousy. They had been leaders in the synagogue, and now saw strangers coming into their places of leadership. Whether these strangers were leading the people into new and blessed truth or not was no matter of concern to their selfish souls. Took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble. "The rabble" implies in the Greek loungers around the market-place, loafers who had no regular business and were ready for any mischief. They were probably heathen, but they took no interest in any question of religion, one way or the other. A cause is known by its allies, and the cause of these Jews was manifestly bad. And gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar. It is easy to raise a mob in an Eastern city, and a mob is often all the more excited and violent the less it knows about the origin and purpose of the turmoil. And assaulting the house of Jason. Evidently the apostles were lodging at Jason's house, but were not there at the time of the assault. In his letter to the Romans, written from Corinth (Rom. 16: 21), Paul refers to a Jason who is a "kinsman," perhaps this same man, who in that case was a Jew. But Jason is a Greek name; his Jewish name may have been Joseph or Joshua. They sought to bring them forth to the people. "Better, 'to arraign them before the people,' i.e., the popular assembly, which shared with the magistrates power in a 'free city,'" — Prof. J. Vernon Barlett.

6. And when they found them not. Paul and Silas were probably evangelizing in some other part of the city; they certainly would not run away from any mob. They dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city. "Dragged" implies violent action, such as a lawless mob would use. The reference to "certain brethren" shows that, short as the time had been, the vigorous apostles had brought together already the nucleus of a Christian church, and Jason's house was their meeting place. The accuracy of Luke is illustrated by his word (one word) translated "rulers of the city," literally, *politarchs*, a word found nowhere else in literature, but preserved for us on an arch in this very city of Thessalonica, the inscription moreover containing several names which occur among the references to Paul's converts in the Acts, — Sosipater, Gaius, and Secundus. Crying. These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also. This is high praise, especially as coming from the enemies of Christianity. The religion of Jesus must already have obtained a formidable influence in the Roman Empire when this could be said of it. The people of Thessalonica had heard of its triumphs. Its coming had been heralded from afar. It was known to be on its conquering way over the world. And it was realized that wherever it came it would accomplish many great reforms, setting right terrible wrongs and abolishing horrible iniquities. Christianity has maintained this reputation ever since. This is exactly what is expected of any series of evangelistic meetings.

7. Whom Jason hath received. As his guests or lodgers, perhaps as his teachers, sharing in their assumed guilt as revolutionaries. And these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar. The accusation took in Paul and Silas when they might be arrested. It was just the same charge of sedition that was found so effective against the missionaries in Philippi and that at the trial of Jesus himself had final weight with Pilate in procuring his condemnation of the Saviour. "Cæsar" (modern "Kaiser" and "Czar") was the general title of the Roman Emperor, and the special decrees referred to were those, such as the *lex Julia de majestate*, asserting that the person of the Cæsar was divine, and protecting the chief authority with severe penalties for any aggression by word or deed. Saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus. Arbitrary rulers are very sensitive, and even the hint of rebellion must be instantly crushed. If Paul had made any reference to "the kingdom of heaven" and to Christ's teachings in regard to it, that would be enough to give color to this charge.

8. And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9. And when they had taken security from Jā'-sōn and the rest, they let them go.

8. And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. Both the common people and their rulers would be disturbed greatly by any charge of treason and sedition, for, though Thessalonica was a free city, it was subject to the emperor, and knew well how swift and heavy would be the punishment from Rome at any hint of disloyalty.

9. And when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go. This seems an anticlimax, but probably the rulers, on investigation, failed to find any real basis for the Jews' charge, and so simply bound Jason and the other Christians over to keep the peace. Their "securities" would be either personal, some influential friends vouching for them, or property pledges, the bail to be forfeited if they should be caught later in any sedition. They would, of course, be entirely willing to give such securities, as they entertained no seditious purpose whatever.

REVOLUTIONARY RELIGION. "Agitation is our profession, the profession of the Christian Church. Unless we have denied the faith and mean to be the worst sort of infidels, we intend not to let things remain just as they are in human life and human society, but to have them altered, to keep on altering them for the better." — *Rev. John Service, D.D.*

Turning the world upside down "must have been a serious matter when you remember that in those days the world was thought to have been flat. Consequently, turning it upside down would have been thought to produce the same results to the people and everything else on the world as our turning of a pan of potatoes upside down — everything would fall out of the pan." — *Rev. Andrew Hansen.*

"The fact is, that the world now is wrong side up, and it needs to be turned upside down in order that it may be right side up. Men speak of religion as though it were a spiritual chloroform, that the people were to take until the sharp cutting of life were over. The Bible, so far from this, represents the religion of Christ as robust and brawny — ransacking and upsetting ten thousand things that now seem to be settled on firm foundations. I hear some man say, 'I thought religion was Peace.' That is the final result. A man's arm is out of place. Two men come, and with great effort put it back to the socket. It goes back with great pain. Then it gets well. Our world is horribly disordered and out of joint. It must come under an omnipotent surgery, beneath which there will be pain and anguish before there can come perfect health and quiet. I proclaim, therefore, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ — Revolution!" — *T. DeWitt Talmage.*

"If you wish to see the world turned upside down to perfection, just turn to the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew: here in the Beatitudes you have a whole summary of the world reversed. Jesus Christ turned the world upside down the very first sermon he preached." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

Christianity has gradually done away with the cruelties of the ancient world. "At the triumph of Aurelian eight hundred pairs of gladiators fought; during the games of Trajan ten thousand. Sometimes female gladiators fought, sometimes dwarfs. The condemned were sometimes burned in shirts of pitch to illuminate the gardens, or were hung upon crosses, and left to be torn by famished bears before the populace. Criminals, dressed in the skins of wild beasts, were exposed to tortured and maddened bulls. Under Nero, four hundred tigers fought with elephants and bulls. When the Colosseum was dedicated by Titus, five thousand animals were killed. Platforms were constructed to drop in pieces at a signal, and launch those upon them into cages of devouring wild beasts; and, most horrible of all, naked women were bound by their hair to the horns of wild bulls that the lust and cruelty of savage spectators might be gratified together." — *R. S. Storrs.*

The social changes wrought in the world by Christianity are nothing less than marvellous. "Ancient cities flaunted their licentiousness in the light of day. Some of the most shameless haunts of impurity were within the temples, and some of the worst offenders were the priests and vestal virgins who represented religion. . . . Children, when they happened to be female, or were not wanted, were exposed, so that cold, or hunger, or cruel beast or bird, might put an end to their existence. . . . Slavery existed on a larger scale, and in more terrible forms, in the classic than the

10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Bê-rœ'-â: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11. Now these were more noble than those in Thës-să-lô-ni'-câ, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.

12. Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of men, not a few.

modern world. Five hundred was not an uncommon number to be owned by one person. Pollio, a Stoic, amused himself by feeding his fish with fragments of his mutilated slaves. Many were furnished to the amphitheatres to be killed in public festivals. Old and infirm slaves were abandoned to die of hunger. . . . Human life, when it ceased to be of value to the state, was reckoned unworthy of care. No provision existed for the sick among the poor, or for the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the idiot, the insane. . . . The marriage-tie was of the slightest, and was broken under the smallest pretexts. Seneca speaks of daily divorces, and he tells of illustrious and noble-born women who reckoned their years not by the number of the consuls, but by that of their husbands. Juvenal has a well-known epigram on the woman who had eight husbands in five years. Tertullian represents divorce as the very purpose and end of Roman marriage. . . . The world is still very far from being a kingdom of God, but it is immensely nearer than it was when Christ came into our midst." — *Rev. W. Garrett Horder.*

II. PAUL IN BERCEA, ACTS 17: 10-15. THE NOBLE BERCÆANS. 10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berceæ. Paul was very unwilling to withdraw from Thessalonica, for he rejoiced beyond measure in his converts there, who proved to be among the chief glories of his ministry, their noble Christian character becoming known far and wide over Greece and contributing much to the spread of Christianity (1 Thess. 1: 7 ff.; 2: 17-20). But the Jews were very bitter, and a continued stay might easily do more harm than good. Berceæ (the modern *Verria*) was another Macedonian city about forty-seven miles southwest of Thessalonica. Who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. Paul followed his usual custom of beginning his work with the Jews and in the synagogue, in spite of the treatment he had received from the Jews of Asia Minor, of Philippi, and of Thessalonica. He was sure that the method was a sound one, and he stuck by his original plan.

11. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica. The Jews, not the Christians; for the Christian church of Thessalonica was one of the noblest of all established by Paul. In that they received the word with all readiness of mind. "The word" was the word of God, the divine teachings of Jesus Christ set forth by the apostles. Readiness for truth, an eager search for all that will enlarge the domain of the mind and soul, is the first quality of real nobility, because without it there can be no other gain, no progress toward the best, no development of the individual or of society. The work of the preacher and the Sunday-school teacher is an unmixed joy where such hearers abound, and every Christian should be one of them. Examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. The Berceæns did not take for granted even the teachings of so great a man as Paul, but tested them for themselves, doing their own thinking as Paul would have had them do it. And they carried Paul's teachings to the one great source of religious truth, the Bible. They knew that if Paul's teachings agreed with the teachings of Scripture, point by point, they were of God, and would meet the test of life. Moreover, the Berceæns did not expect to make this examination without long and patient toil; day after day they compared the teachings with the Book; they realized that the issues were too vast for haste, too important for carelessness. This is pre-eminently the Sunday-school verse of the Bible, the motto for the Bible student.

12. Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of men, not a few. They believed "therefore," as a result of their Bible study, the sure result when that study is honestly conducted. The Greek women and men may have been Jewish proselytes, probably were. The "honorable estate" refers to wealth and social position, and indicates the respect in which women were held in Macedonia, a condition which Paul encountered at once on his arrival, in the case of Lydia.

JEWISH MISCHIEF-MAKERS. Not for long, however, did the trouble-making, bigoted Jews of Thessalonica allow the noble-minded, unprejudiced Jews of Berea to have their way. Hearing from travellers and traders that Paul was in that city, and of his success, their narrow zeal impelled them to follow him thither, and to attempt to stir up the popular opposition to the apostle, doubtless by means of the same false charges of seditious teaching which they had found so effective in Thessalonica. At once, without waiting for these hostile efforts to come to a climax, the Berean Christians sent Paul to Athens (whether by land or sea is uncertain), keeping Timothy and Silas in Berea to give them further instruction. They did not retain Silas and Timothy long, however, for an urgent summons for them came soon from Paul at Athens. The apostle seems to have wanted to give his assistants instruction before sending them back, Timothy to Thessalonica and Silas to Philippi, to carry further the work which he had begun in those places.

CHRISTIAN USE OF THE BIBLE. "The nobility of mind praised in the Bereans does not consist in the choice of the subject examined — (although that subject is the Scriptures) — but in the open-mindedness, and in the earnest toilsomeness of the *examining*. 'More noble,' in that they listened to new views 'with all readiness of mind,' and 'examined daily' into their consistency with facts." — *Archbishop Benson*. Any prejudgment or bigotry vitiates Bible study.

"True nobility of soul consists in willingness to receive the Word, combined with diligent testing of it. Christ asks for no blind adhesion. The true Christian teacher wishes for no renunciation, on the part of his hearers, of their own judgments. 'Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and swallow what I give you,' is not the language of Christianity, though it has sometimes been the demand of its professed missionaries; and not the teacher only, but the taught also, have been but too ready to exercise blind credulity instead of intelligent examination and clear-eyed faith. If professing Christians to-day were better acquainted with the Scriptures, and more in the habit of bringing every new doctrine to them as its touchstone, there would be less currency of errors and firmer grip of truth." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

"The only possible apparatus by which we shall be able to use the Scriptures aright is a clean life, an obedient spirit, and a prayerful heart; by which we mean the constant desire to know the will of the Lord, and to do all we can according to that will." — *George Dawson*.

III. HOW PAUL PREACHED. FULLY PREACHING THE GOSPEL, Rom. 15:18-20. In his letter to the Romans, written about six years later than this time, Paul sets forth succinctly and strongly the guiding principles of his ministry. As to the *place*, he sought out the cities where Christ had not even been named, so that he might build on his own foundation and not another's. As to his *chief aim*, he sought "the obedience of the Gentiles," though always beginning with the Jews. As to his *means and methods*, his ministry was "by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit." And as to the scope of his ministry, he "fully preached the gospel of Christ," omitting nothing that was essential, of doctrine, of ordinances, of organization, of instruction, of inspiration. These should be the guiding principles of all Christian workers even to this day.

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT, 1 Thess. 5:12-23. In his first letter to the church in Thessalonica, written only a few weeks after the time of our lesson and therefore the very earliest book of the New Testament, Paul lays down the principles of a happy and successful church. They are:

1. Regard for the pastor and church officers, honoring them, loving them, and heeding their words.
2. Peace among the church members.
3. Mutual support, strengthening, encouraging in every good work, rebuking every evil.
4. Pray without ceasing, the spirit of prayer animating all parts of the church and inspiring all its activities.
5. Rejoice always. In everything give thanks. Happiness is the best advertisement of Christianity.
6. Quench not the Spirit. Expect messages from above. Follow every divine admonition.
7. Be enterprising. Test all new ideas. Reject what will not stand the test, but hold fast all that proves good.
8. Abstain from every form of evil. Avoid all worldliness. Keep the church pure and spotless.

9. Seek entire sanctification. God's people should be holy. Through God's grace and power they may be. The Lord Jesus may return again at any time. Shall he not find his church ready for his coming?

These nine principles are ideal foundation stones for any modern church.

LESSON XI. — September 9.

PAUL IN ATHENS AND CORINTH. — Acts 17:16—18:17;
1 Corinthians 2:1-16; 1 Timothy 2:3-7.

PRINT Acts 18:1-11; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* — 1 COR. 2:2.

Devotional Reading : 1 Cor. 13:4-13.

Primary Topic : PAUL TELLS OF JESUS IN TWO GREAT CITIES.

Lesson Material : Acts 17:16—18:17; 1 Cor. 2:1-16; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

Print Acts 18:1-11; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

Memory Verse : I will trust and not be afraid. Isa. 12:2.

Junior Topic : PAUL TELLS OF JESUS IN TWO GREAT CITIES.

Lesson Material : Acts 17:16—18:17; 1 Cor. 2:1-16; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

Print Acts 18:1-11; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

Memory Verse : With good courage we say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear. Heb. 13:6.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL AS A WORKER.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL, PREACHER AND TEACHER.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will be interested in a little geography lesson. Picture the glories of Athens and Corinth, the beauties of the temples, the great writers and orators, the spirited athletic contests, the people's love of liberty. Then show them the other side of the picture, the disgusting orgies that took the place of religion, the hopelessness of the people, the way they trifled with life, the shame of human slavery, and all the other horrors of an idolatrous country. Then tell what Paul did to lead them to better ways.

The Older Classes have in this lesson a fine chance to contrast nature worship and human philosophy and art at their best with the comfort and confidence which true religion alone can bestow. Have present some teacher of ancient history who will give facts regarding the life of the Greeks and Romans, and show how little their religion did for them, and why it was necessary for Christ to come and redeem the world which it had cursed.

Question Suggested for Discussion : What shall we say to those who insist that the heathen are best off when left alone, with no "interference" from Christian missionaries?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's stay of a year and a half in Corinth, A.D. 51, 52.

Place. — After several weeks in Athens, Paul removed to Corinth.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul as an orator.
Christianity and art.
What Paul thought of philosophy.
Athenian characteristics.
Corinthian characteristics.
Paul's letters to Corinth.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul, Preacher and Teacher.

I. PAUL IN ATHENS, Acts 17:16-34.

On Mars' Hill.
The Unknown God revealed.
A call to Christ.

II. PAUL IN CORINTH, Acts 18:1-17.

Paul earning his way.
Paul divinely encouraged.
Paul preserved by Gallio.

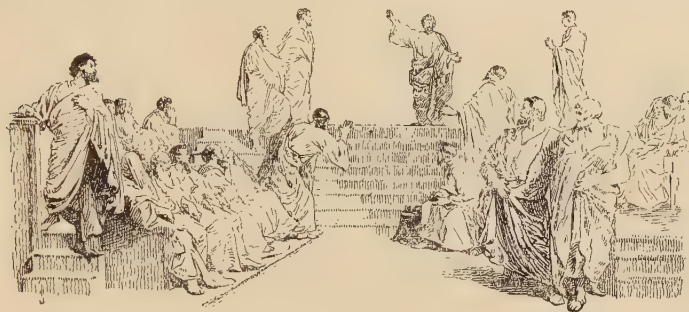
III. PAUL AS A WORKER.

How Paul worked in Corinth, 1 Cor. 2:1-16.
Paul's guiding principles in his work, 1 Tim. 2:3-7.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hill's *The Apostolic Age*. Davies's *St. Paul in Greece*. Alexander's *St. Paul at Athens*. Jones's *St. Paul the Orator*. Wilson's *The Church We Forget*. Rackham's *Acts in Westminster Commentaries*. Neander's *Church History*. Knowing in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*.

I. PAUL IN ATHENS, Acts 17:16-34. **ON MARS' HILL.** It is thrilling to think of Paul in Athens. In many ways that wonderful city has never been approached, so that still, when we wish to praise a city as the abode of learning and art, we call it "the Modern Athens." Athens was famous for its statesmen, such as Solon, Themistocles, and Pericles; for its philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; for its historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon; for its dramatists, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes; for its orators, Demosthenes and Æschines; for its sculptors, Phidias and Myron; for its lyric poets, Pindar and



Paul Preaching at Athens.

Bida.

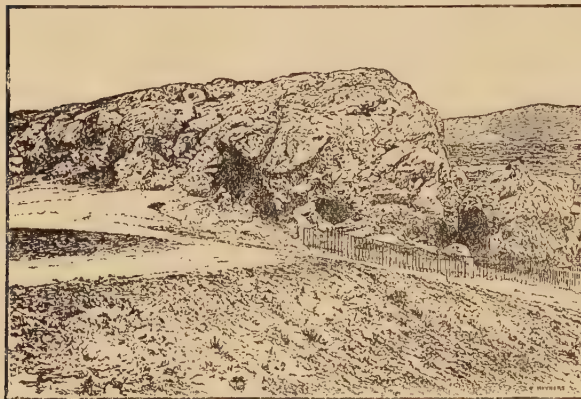
Simonides. Its imposing Acropolis bears on its summit the ruins of the world's most beautiful building, the Parthenon, or temple to Athena (Minerva). Athens was a great military power, victor at Marathon and at Salamis. It was the most interesting progenitor of the modern republics. It was a most original city, pre-eminently a city of genius, and was great in more ways than any other city in which men have yet lived.

Paul waited at Athens for Timothy and Silas to come to him. "But for him to remain silent was impossible, especially in such a city as Athens, — a city puffed up with conceit of knowledge yet despising the heavenly wisdom, worshipping a multitude of deities but ignorant of God. To him with his Jewish training the wonderful Greek sculpture was simply repulsive, and the city, adorned everywhere with statues of gods and goddesses, seemed full of idols. He felt there was sore need of the message he burned to proclaim. Moreover, Athens was thronged with sons of Roman nobles, sent there to be educated; and none of their teachers, Epicurean or Stoic, was giving them the true preparation for a righteous and useful life. Paul's heart, which ever went out towards young men, yearned to reach in some way these future rulers of the Empire. In his boyhood he had lived in a university city, so the atmosphere of this most famous of university cities was not strange; and while now he was a persecuted and despised Christian missionary, he was also a Roman gentleman, acquainted with letters and philosophy, and able to hold his own with the Athenian teachers. Accordingly, though the synagogue was open to him and he preached in it, his daily resort was the marketplace, the center of all the city life, where like a Christian Socrates he entered into debate with whomever he met. Paul never was inconspicuous long, and now he soon had a crowd surrounding him whenever he spoke; and though some sneered and others were puzzled, all listened." — *Prof. William Bancroft Hill.*

In these discussions Paul soon encountered the teachers of the two reigning schools of philosophy, the Stoics and the Epicureans. The Stoics identified God with the universe, and were pantheists and materialists. They held that the gods cared only for the universe and not the men, and that a man's lot was fixed by unchanging law; they were fatalists. They urged men to bring themselves, through knowledge, into harmony with law as their only chance of happiness; but also they urged men to make themselves proudly indifferent to fate, and held it no sin to escape from fate by suicide.

The Epicureans held the search for pleasure to be the chief good, but by pleasure they meant a body free from pain and a calm mind. They were materialists. They taught that the world was ruled by chance and that the gods cared nothing for men.

To both parties Paul seemed to be introducing new deities to an already overstocked Olympus. Jesus was one, and Anastasis (the Greek word for "the Resurrection") may have been thought by them to be a second new god. To do this was illegal. That he did this was one of the silly charges brought against Socrates, leading to the death of that great man. These, however, were easier times, and when Paul was induced to set forth his views before an assembly on Mars' Hill (the Areopagus),



Mars' Hill, in Athens,

is the elevation next to the Acropolis on the west. It terminates in a precipice 60 feet high over against the Acropolis. Here, on the summit of the rocks, the venerable criminal court of Athens often held its councils, and here it may be that Paul delivered his memorable address to the men of Athens.

it was more as an interesting stranger would be asked to deliver a lecture to a crowd whose ears were always itching for novelties.

"Mars' Hill is a rocky platform northwest of the rock of the Acropolis. At its eastern extremity it is a sheer precipice of frowning rock, inaccessible save where a staircase of sixteen steps is hewn in its side. The surface of this rock was the site of the tribunal of the most ancient and most solemn court of judicature in Athens, the court of the Areopagus. Here, under the open sky, its sittings were held. Close by was the shrine of the mortal to his doom." —

Furies, the avenging spirits that pursued the sin-haunted mortal to his doom." — *Rev. G. S. Davies.*

"Men of Athens," Paul began his address, using the formula familiar as the beginning of all classical Greek orations. His opening words would be understood by his hearers as a compliment: Paul declared that he had found the people of Athens to be "very religious." They had on show no fewer than three thousand public statues, most of them representing gods or goddesses; a Roman poet once said sarcastically that it was easier in Athens to find gods than men.

Among these multifarious statues Paul had lighted upon one dedicated "To an Unknown God." Perhaps it had been erected in the superstitious fear of offending some unknown deity to whom in all that forest of idolatrous shrines no one had erected a statue. Perhaps it was set up with a dim feeling of the unsatisfying nature of polytheism, a reaching out after some unknown god who could do more than any of the gods already worshipped. "May we not suppose that in the bosoms of those who erected it there was a deep consciousness that beyond and above all that eye could see, or reason discover, or fancy imagine, there must be a mighty Power on whose will the whole depends, and by whose influence all is pervaded? and unable to form any conception of such a Being, yet having some vague sense of awe and worship, may they not have intended at once to profess their belief and to confess their ignorance by erecting an altar and inscribing it to 'an unknown god.'?" — *Rev. William Lindsay Alexander, D.D.*

"In the vision of that sculptor was thus foreseen the Christ — the sculptor was the Isaiah of heathendom. This was Paul's text, and from it he declared his good news. Over the entire range of Greek art and philosophy he wrote the word 'ignorance.'" — *P. Whitwell Wilson.*

He taught the image-worshipping Athenians the folly of idolatry. There is one God and only one. He made heaven and earth and does not live in man-made temples. He gave men all things and needs no gifts or sacrifices from men. All he wants from us is that we should feel after him and find him, for he is not far from every one of us. So near is he that he has come down to dwell among men, to die for men, and to prove his deity by rising again from the dead.

That was the outline of Paul's masterly and most courageous address, as Luke

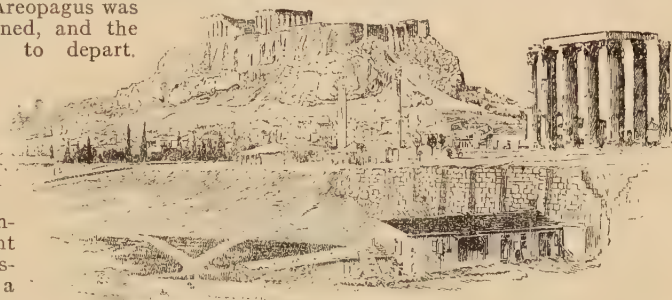
ACTS 18:1. After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.

2. And he found a certain Jew named Āq'-uī-lā, a man of Pōn'-tūs by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them;

records it and as we may supply the hints he gives in his outline. "To the majority of the court the mention of the resurrection was a proof of mental delusion. The meeting of the Areopagus was therefore adjourned, and the apostle allowed to depart.

Thus at Athens, as in many another city, the gospel of Jesus Christ, with its message of grace and peace, and its solemn warnings of a judgment to come, was dismissed with a laugh."—*Maurice Jones*. As a result

of this sermon, however, Paul won some souls to Christ, among them a woman named Damaris, and a man named Dionysius who was important enough to have been chosen a member of the chief council of Athens, that of the Areopagus, and whom tradition names as the first Christian bishop of Athens.



From a photograph.

View of Athens.

The Acropolis, the highest point in the city.

II. PAUL IN CORINTH, ACTS 18:1-17. PAUL EARNING HIS WAY. 1. After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. This famous city was about fifty miles west of Athens. It enjoyed a situation most favorable for trade, for it was placed on the rocky Isthmus of Corinth, 262 feet high and three and two-thirds miles wide, which connected northern Greece with the southern peninsula, the Peloponnesus. Thus Corinth was the point of transference of ships' cargoes between the Ægean and Adriatic Seas, and through it trade was conducted between the north and the south. Marine traffic is now conducted through a canal cut across the isthmus. Corinth itself was noted for its statues and pictures, its vases and vessels of metal and earthenware. The Isthmian games, held at Corinth, were among the most famous of athletic contests. At one time the city is said to have had 300,000 inhabitants, with more than half a million slaves at work in its fleet and its colonies. It was a city of pleasure and of unbridled license, where the idle rich of all lands went to satisfy beastly desires. About two centuries before Paul's visit the Romans under Mummius completely destroyed the city, but a century after this destruction it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar. Hadrian completed the restoration some sixty years after Paul's visit. On February 21, 1858, the city was utterly destroyed by an earthquake, and since that time a new Corinth with about four thousand inhabitants has grown up in a more convenient position, about three miles to the northeast of the ancient site. The American School of Classical Studies has made important excavations on the site of old Corinth, uncovering some of the chief remains of the great days of old.

2. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila. Aquila (Latin for "eagle") was not his Hebrew name, but was probably assumed by him when he went to live in Rome. The Jews regard him as the same as a certain Onkelos who wrote a commentary on the Pentateuch, and some think he is the Aquila who translated the Old Testament into Greek. In that case his learning would be one reason attracting Paul to him. A man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy. Pontus was a district of northern Asia Minor, south of the Black Sea. Men from Pontus were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:9). Mithridates, king of Pontus, was defeated by Pompey, and that event may have led to Aquila's going to Rome. He seems to have returned to Rome from Corinth (Rom. 16:3). Later he and his wife appear in Ephesus, from

3. And because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers.

which the first letter to the Corinthians was written by Paul (see 1 Cor. 16:19), and later when Timothy at Ephesus received his second letter from Paul (2 Tim. 4:19). The removals of Aquila and Priscilla illustrate the unsettled nature of the times. **With his wife Priscilla.** "Of the two Priscilla was the predominant personality; in four places out of the six where the couple are mentioned her name comes



Doric Temple at Corinth.

first. She probably took the leading part in evangelistic work, and therefore is to be classed with Lydia and the other notable women who 'labored for the gospel.' It has indeed been suggested, and the suggestion is most interesting and probable, that Priscilla was a Roman lady, of higher rank than Aquila. But whether Roman or Jewess, she shared her husband's exile."

— *Richard B. Rackham*. **Because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome.**

Claudius, Emperor of Rome, issued a decree which is thus referred to by the historian Suetonius: "The Jews, constantly making disturbance, Chrestus being the instigator, he expelled them from Rome." "We might suppose that some factious Jew then living, of this name, one of the numerous class of Jewish freedmen in Rome, was intended. But as no individual so universally known as the Chrestus of Suetonius seems to have been considered by that writer is elsewhere mentioned, and as *Christos* (Christ in Greek) was frequently pronounced *Chrestos* by the pagans, it is quite probable that Suetonius, who wrote half a century after the event, through what he had heard about the political expectations of a Messiah among the Jews and the obscure and confused accounts which may have reached him respecting Christ, was thus led to express himself in a manner so vague and indefinite." — *Neander*. It seems quite clear that Aquila and Priscilla were already Christians when Paul took up his abode with them. **And he came unto them.** He was doubly glad to live with them: because they were fellow-Christians, and because they came from Rome, thus establishing a link with the great city, the center of the world, to which Paul's thoughts were doubtless already turning in eagerness to preach the gospel there. There were Jews and Jewish proselytes from Rome at Pentecost (Acts 2:10), and Aquila and Priscilla may have been among them, or may have learned about Christ from some of them returning.

3. **And because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers.** "Of the same trade" is one word in the Greek, and is a technical word used by physicians of one another; thus it is one of the many evidences that Dr. Luke wrote the Acts. We have already discussed the wise Jewish practice of teaching their boys some trade, no matter how wealthy the family might be, and even when the lad was educated as a rabbi, as Paul was. Paul probably followed his father's trade, as was customary, and tentmaking was easily learned at Tarsus of Cilicia, where the goats abounded from whose hair a rough cloth called Cilician cloth was made, and out of this cloth tents were constructed. Later, in writing to the Corinthian Christians, Paul glories in the fact that he earned his own way and was no expense to them, while at the same time he admonishes them not to make that a precedent in the case of any other Christian preacher, for "the laborer is worthy of his hire" (see 1 Cor. 9:6-18; 2 Cor. 11:7-12).

4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

5. But when Silas and Timothy came down from Măc-ě-dō'-nĭ-ă, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

6. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7. And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath. Following his invariable custom in a new town, Paul began his work where he was most likely to find converts; for in spite of the bigotry of some Jews, their training in the purest religion the world had yet known made them more accessible than pagans to the truths of Christianity. **And persuaded Jews and Greeks.** "Was persuading," the Greek imperfect tense implying continued and customary action. The "Greeks" were proselytes to Judaism, or they would not have been found in the synagogue.

5. But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia. These two helpers had been left at Berœa (Acts 17:14), and perhaps had continued the work in Thessalonica also; but Paul sent for them to help in the larger city of Corinth. **Paul was constrained by the word.** The Philippian Christians had sent him money, so that he was not obliged to work so hard for his own support (Phil. 4:15; 2 Cor. 11:9), and could give more time to preaching and teaching. The Spirit moved him to do this work of "preaching the word" with more zeal even than before. Every Christian should be thus "constrained," urged forward, until all the world is won for the Redeemer. **Testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.** His testimony was based on the ancient prophecies fulfilled in Christ, by his own conversion through a vision of Christ, and by the facts of Christ's death and resurrection. His text was ever this: "The man Jesus was the divine Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world." It is the central truth of Christianity.

6. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed. "Opposed" is a military term, they set themselves in array against Paul. They blasphemed by calling the divine Christ all sorts of horrible names, as is illustrated in 1 Cor. 12:3; see also Acts 13:45; 19:9. **He shook out his raiment.** A gesture of dismissal: he was done with them, as he was done with the dust which he shook from his robe. They had had their opportunity, and had spurned it. **And said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.** They had chosen the way of ruin and death; Paul had done his best to prevent it; they, and not he, were responsible for their awful and final choice. See the solemn words at the close of the Bible, Rev. 22:11. **From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.** This does not mean that Paul would no longer, as before, make his first approach to the Jews; he did that, as usual, when he reached Ephesus (Acts 19:8), and doubtless at other places. It only means that for the rest of his stay in Corinth he would work among the Gentiles.

7. And he departed thence. That is, from the synagogue. **And went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God.** Titus was his name, according to the oldest manuscripts. He was a Roman convert to Judaism, and so his house would make a useful meeting place for both Jewish and Gentile Christians. Justus was probably a name which he took on when he became a Jewish proselyte. Paul doubtless continued to lodge with Aquila and Priscilla. **Whose house joined hard to the synagogue.** Thus it was doubly suitable as a meeting place, and was very convenient for those of the Jews who might even yet be persuaded to become Christians. At the same time the nearness of the Christian meeting place would make it a thorn in the side of the Jews who were bitter against Paul and his teachings.

8. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house. Paul made it a practice to delegate the work of baptizing to others, lest a

9. And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace:

10. For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city.

11. And he dwelt *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Pauline party might arise; but this Crispus was so important an accession that the apostle himself baptized him (1 Cor. 1: 14, 16), together with Gaius, whom some think to have been the same as Titus Justus, and the household of Stephanas. The ruler of a synagogue presided over the synagogue meetings like the leader of a modern prayer meeting, calling upon different persons to read the Scriptures and comment upon them, or take part in other ways. This might be done by a single officer, or by a small committee of "rulers." **And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.** Baptism is here emphasized because Paul has an opportunity to organize a church in comparative quiet and with thoroughness, but elsewhere also, even in the midst of turmoil, we have seen that Paul insisted on baptism as the seal of admission to the church of Christ. The baptisms were, it would seem, usually performed by Silas or Timothy.

9. **And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision.** Paul, we have seen, was a man of visions. He had beheld the Lord on the road to Damascus; he had seen a vision of Ananias coming to him and restoring his sight; he had seen a vision of the Macedonian summoning him to Europe; now again he sees the Lord Jesus Christ. May we not believe that Paul's sleep was often blest with these visions of his Redeemer? **Be not afraid.** Here is a window into the heart life of the apostle. He was not dully insensible to fear while doing his splendidly courageous work, facing the machinations of the Jews and the rage of the idolaters. He had suffered much, from stoning, scourging, and imprisonment, and he shrank from more suffering; but he showed his heroism by marching straight forward in spite of his fear. "I am afraid," a soldier once acknowledged when taunted with his white face in the midst of a desperate charge. "If you were half as much afraid as I am you would turn and run." Paul needed this strengthening, and therefore the Lord gave it. Had he not himself in Gethsemane prayed that the cup might pass from him? **But speak and hold not thy peace.** In spite of his fear, even because of it, Paul was to speak more boldly and continually than before. The way to conquer fears is to act as if they did not exist.

10. **For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee.** "I" is expressed in the Greek, as it is when it is very emphatic. "I, the All-Powerful, the All-Wise, the All-Loving, am by thy side." Paul thenceforth knew, like Elisha of old (2 Kings 6: 16), that he was surrounded by a heavenly guard. Note that he was not promised immunity from attack, but immunity from harm, which is all any one can ask; and this promise is given by Christ to every Christian in the path of duty. **For I have much people in this city.** The church flourished in Corinth, as Paul's letters to it show abundantly. This was all the encouragement Paul needed, the knowledge that his labors were to be successful. It is all the cheer required by any true worker.

11. **And he dwelt *there* a year and six months.** An unusual word in the Greek is translated rather inadequately "dwelt," for it means to sit down at ease. "The word may be purposely used here to indicate the quiet and settled work to which the apostle was directed by the vision which had calmed his troubled spirit, and had taught him that his cherished plan of revisiting Macedonia must be postponed to preaching the word in Corinth. During this period First and Second Thessalonians were probably written." — *Prof. R. J. Knowling*. **Teaching the word of God among them.** This period of quiet teaching, evangelizing, and organizing was broken into only once, by the attack next to be related; and that attack proved abortive, as Christ in the vision had promised.

PAUL PRESERVED BY GALLIO (Acts 18: 12-17). A Roman province belonging to the Emperor was governed by a *proprator*, while one belonging to the State was governed by a *proconsul*. Achaia, the province in which Corinth was situated, was a senatorial province under Augustus, an imperial province during part of the reign of Tiberius, and now under Claudius it was again senatorial and was ruled by a proconsul, as Luke correctly states. The proconsul during Paul's sojourn in Corinth

1 TIM. 2: 3. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4. Who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

5. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, *himself* man, Christ Jesus,

was a notable man, whose name by birth was Marcus Annæus Novatus, but who was adopted by the orator Lucius Junius Gallio, and took his name of Gallio. He was the brother of the justly famous philosopher Seneca, Nero's tutor and for a time his minister. Seneca said of him that "those who love him to the utmost, do not love him enough." His popularity, and his bright, lovable character, are indicated by the affectionate nickname given him, "Sweet Gallio."

Before this man Paul was haled by his Jewish enemies, who charged him with teaching contrary to the Jewish religion, one of the permitted religions of the empire. But Gallio would listen neither to them nor to Paul. "It is not a matter of wrong doing," he said, "but only a dispute regarding your Jewish theology. I'll have nothing to do with it." And he had his officers drive them, still gesticulating and vociferating, out of his judgment hall.

This being the indifferent attitude of the proconsul, the Greeks in the court-room, who sympathized with Paul, saw a chance to teach his Jewish enemies a needed lesson, so they took the Jewish spokesman and gave him a beating right in front of Gallio's judgment seat, which the proconsul had probably vacated. The name of this Jew was Sosthenes (evidently not the Sosthenes of 1 Cor. 1: 1), and he had been appointed ruler of the synagogue when Crispus joined the Christians. "And Gallio cared for none of these things."

III. PAUL AS A WORKER. HOW PAUL WORKED IN CORINTH, 1 COR. 2: 1-16. Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth was written during his long stay in Ephesus, and was largely prompted by the desire to put an end to the dissensions that had arisen among the Corinthians. As these disputes were caused by those who sought to disparage Paul and his teachings, the first portion of the letter is occupied by a statement of Paul's motives in preaching and a defence of his gospel labors.

The second chapter is part of this section. It sets forth how Paul had come to Corinth not relying on rhetoric or logic or worldly wisdom, which perhaps he had depended upon in that famous address on Mars' Hill in Athens which had produced comparatively small results. Paul went to Corinth determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He relied not on the arts of persuasive eloquence, but on the power of the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit knows the things of God, and man knows the divine mysteries only as they are revealed to him through the Spirit. Paul humbly claimed to have learned spiritual truth in this, the only way it can be learned, and to have the mind of Christ. This was the basis of his teaching in Corinth, and it is still the basis on which alone any Christian preacher or Sunday-school teacher can win souls to Christ.

PAUL'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN HIS WORK, 1 TIM. 2: 3-7. Timothy was with Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome, and afterwards was sent by the apostle to Ephesus as his representative, to guide the church there. The first letter to Timothy was written to instruct the young preacher in this task, and sets forth Paul's conception of the way in which a Christian leader should do his divinely appointed work, and the great truths which he should proclaim. This is marvellously outlined in the following brief extract from that Epistle.

3. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. The acceptable thing is the tranquil life which results from communion with God (vs. 1, 2). God rejoices in this peace of his people. Note the title of "Saviour" applied to God quite as it is applied to Christ; this is as it should be, for Christ is God.

4. Who would have all men to be saved. The Christian doctrine of election is to be interpreted in the light of passages such as this. God is Saviour essentially and eternally; he longs for the salvation of every one of his creatures. And come to the knowledge of the truth. A bare knowledge of the truth of Christ and salvation is not enough; the devils believe and tremble. It must be a saving knowledge, knowledge which leads to repentance and obedience, love and service.

5. For there is one God. The doctrine of the Trinity is not a doctrine of three Gods, but of only one God with three personalities. One mediator also between God and men, *himself* man, Christ Jesus. Paul does not say, "himself God," for

6. Who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony *to be borne* in its own times;

7. Whereunto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

he takes that for granted. The miracle was that the Divine Mediator could and did become man. It was in order to impress this wonderful fact that Christ's favorite name for himself was "the Son of man."

6. **Who gave himself a ransom for all.** Of course a mere man could not serve as a ransom from sin for all men; only God could do that. But he could do it only as a man. **The testimony to be borne in its own times.** That is, when the right time for it in the history of the world had arrived, the time for Christ's testimony to the sacrificial love of God, the New Testament in his blood. Christ came in the fullness of time, when the world had sunk deepest in the mire of sin, and when a little nucleus of men was ready to receive the truth of redemption.

7. **Whereunto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not).** For the passing of this Testament along, from the dying and risen Christ to the hearts of needy men, Paul was divinely appointed by the words of Christ himself on the Damascus road. That was his ordination, he said to his critics in Corinth. Paul spoke the truth in this solemn assertion, though he felt the truth to be almost too great to be believed. **A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.** "The faith is the spirit, and the truth is the material, in which he carries out his apostolic mission." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* These words are a golden summary of Paul's life work. Can we not make them ours?

LESSON XII. — September 16.

PAUL WRITES TO HIS FRIENDS IN CORINTH. — I Corinthians

I-4.

PRINT 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:5-11, 21-23.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!* — Ps. 133:1.

Devotional Reading: Eph. 4:1-6.

Primary Topic: PAUL WRITES A LETTER TO HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material: I Cor. 1-4. Print 1:10-13; 3:5-11, 21-23.

Memory Verse: Be at peace among yourselves. I Thess. 5:13.

Junior Topic: PAUL WRITES A GOOD LETTER TO HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material: I Cor. 1-4. Print 1:10-13; 3:5-11, 21-23.

Memory Verse: I Thess. 5:13.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: PAUL URGES TEAM WORK.

Topic for Young People and Adults: PAUL PLEADS FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes need this lesson, for it is a lesson on disputes and how to avoid them. The comparison of the one field with many gardeners, and the comparison of the one building with many builders, applies to the child's home life and school life, to athletics, and to the Sunday school and the church. Try in this lesson to put the social spirit into the child, the spirit of co-operation.

The Older Classes have here one of the most practical and timely of lessons; for

modern life is rent with many disputes, between classes, between parties, between religious sects and divisions in the sects, and especially among the nations. This lesson shows us Paul's way of peace, and it is Christ's way also. Divide the fields of practical application among the members of the class, and consider under their leadership as many of them as you can.

Question Suggested for Discussion: Is it desirable or possible for society to become a unit? And, if so, how may this be brought about?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Christian Unity.

I. "IS CHRIST DIVIDED?" 1 COR. 1 : 1-2 : 16.

The purpose of the Epistle.
"Perfected together in the same mind."
Christian humility.

II. THE ONE FOUNDATION, 1 COR. 3 : 1-17.

"God gave the increase."
God's building.
The temple of God.

III. "ALL THINGS ARE YOURS," 1 COR. 3 : 18-4 : 21.

"Let no one glory in men."
Faithful stewards.
The kingdom of God in power.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Alford's *New Testament for English Readers*.
Findlay in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. Carroll's
Interpretation of the English Bible, First Corinthians.

Roberts's *The Gospel at Corinth*. Drummond on First Corinthians in *International Handbooks to the New Testament*. Riggs on 1 Corinthians in *The Bible for Home and School*. Robertson and Plummer in *The International Critical Commentary*. Lias in *The Cambridge Bible*. Massie in *The New Century Bible*. Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Dods in *The Expositor's Bible*. Murray's *Humility*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul's treatment of factions.
Christ's cure for the spirit of dissension.
Bible teachings on humility.
Christ the one Foundation.
Building metaphors throughout the Bible.
The Bible on stewardship.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians near the end of his stay of nearly three years in Ephesus, A.D. 53-56.

Place. — The Epistle was written in Ephesus, the chief city of Asia Minor.



From a photograph by Dr. Arthur S. Cooley.
Ruins of the Temple of Diana, Ephesus.

I. "IS CHRIST DIVIDED?" 1 COR. 1 : 1-2 : 16. THE PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE. We learned in our last lesson that Paul wrote his first letter to the church at Corinth during his long stay in Ephesus, having heard disquieting news of the differences which had been stirred up among the Corinthian Christians by certain critics of his work, partisans for other Christian leaders, notably Apollos and Peter, though we may completely absolve those great men and noble Christians from any share in the miserable business. These mischief-makers had done their best to discredit Paul in the church which he had founded with so much self-denying care. "He was a man of no eloquence," they said (1 Cor. 1 : 17 ; 2 : 4, 5, 13 ; compare 4 : 3, 19). He was ignorant of the rules of rhetoric (2 Cor. 11 : 6). He had not even the *physique* of the orator (2 Cor. 10 : 10). And, besides this, he was no true apostle. He had not been among the disciples of Jesus himself (1 Cor. 9 : 1). And his conduct conclusively showed that he and his companion Barnabas did not possess an authority co-ordinate with that of the Twelve (1 Cor. 9 : 5, 6). His doctrine, too, was irreconcilable with theirs. He was a renegade Jew. He had thrown off the yoke of the

I COR. I: 10. Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them *that are of the household* of Chlō'-ē, that there are contentions among you.

12. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of A-pōl'-lōs; and I of Çē'-phās; and I of Christ.

Jewish law, whereas it was well known that the original apostles of the Lord regarded it as binding (Gal. 2: 7-13). Teachers like these had already alienated from Paul the members of one church which he had founded (Gal. 1: 6, 7; 3: 1; 4: 16). — *Prof. J. J. Lias.*

10. **Now I beseech you, brethren.** After his opening salutations, and his just and tactful praise of the Corinthian church, Paul enters at once on the main theme of his letter with the word "now," and hints at the purpose of his writing with the word "brethren." The apostle was full of longing that all the members of the beloved church should be brothers indeed, as all Christians should be. **Through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Ten times in the first ten verses of the Epistle Paul introduces the name of the Lord Jesus. It is as if he wanted to shame the Corinthians out of their disputings over the names of human leaders by reminding them over and over of the one Name which all of them had taken upon themselves, the Name which is above every name, the Name which should be the bond of union among Christians, the talisman of their unbreakable brotherhood. **That ye all speak the same thing.** Name the same leader, Jesus Christ. Talk of the same doctrines. Exalt the same faith. **And that there be no divisions among you.** The Greek word translated "divisions" is that which appears in English as "schisms"; here, however, it means not separations from the Christian community, but factions within it. Elsewhere the word is used of a rent in a garment. **But that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.** The Greek word translated "perfected together" "is suggestive of fitting together what is broken or rent. It is used in surgery for setting a joint, and in Greek politics for *composing factions*." — *International Critical Commentary.* Paul is not urging them all to think exactly alike, for that would be impossible and undesirable; but let them possess perfect unanimity of spirit.

11. **For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe.** It is plausibly conjectured that Chloe, who is not elsewhere mentioned, was a lady in Ephesus, where Paul was living when he wrote this Epistle, and that she had some Christian slaves who had been sent to Corinth on some errand, and, returning, had brought to Paul the disquieting news which led, in part, to the writing of the letter. Paul would have the Corinthians know that none of them had "told tales out of school" in regard to this matter. **That there are contentions among you.** Disputes, but not separations; quarrels, however, which might easily grow into schisms. Surgeons tell us that every slight cut in the skin should be treated promptly with antiseptics, or it is likely to become infected, and serious results may follow. The present writer once spent three months in the hospital, with many surgical operations, some of which were serious, all because of a slight abrasion of the skin which became infected.

12. **Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.** From Acts 18: 24-28 it is gathered that the famous Christian teacher, Apollos, was a Jew of Alexandria, possibly a pupil of the celebrated Alexandrian teacher, Philo. He became a disciple of John the Baptist, was zealous in preaching the Christianity he learned from that great herald of the Messiah, went as far as Ephesus proclaiming the wonderful truth with burning eloquence, there received fuller Christian light from Aquila and Priscilla, and from there went on to Greece where his preaching moved many hearts. He seems to have been a more eloquent man even than Paul, but the apostle was not jealous of him, urged him to revisit Corinth (1 Cor. 16: 12), and bade Titus help him (Titus 3: 13). Many scholars think that Apollos wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. As Cephas is the Aramaic word for Peter, the party that claimed him for their leader

13. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?

I COR. 3:5. What then is A-pōl'-lōs? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him.

may have consisted of Christian Jews who urged the retention of certain Jewish rites which Paul was willing to allow his converts to disregard, and who also desired for their guide one who had been a member of the original Twelve. Those who flaunted the name of Christ as their slogan did so in the spirit of faction, as if they alone were true to the Founder of the church. Paul places them in equal condemnation with the others. He is opposing the spirit of partisanship. He and Apollos and Peter should be for all the church, even as Christ was for all the church, and all the church should be for them.

13. **Is Christ divided?** "Christ belonged to the whole church. Does he belong to one section of it? Does the Christ as interpreted by Paul differ from the Christ interpreted by Apollos? The parties were virtually saying 'Yes,' and thus bringing about difference and division." — *Prof. James S. Riggs*. **Was Paul crucified for you?** There has been only one death for the sins of the world. By his atonement Christ reigns supreme over the hearts and lives of the creatures whom he redeemed. There is but one Saviour, and in comparison with his glory and authority the glory and authority of any man are as nothing. **Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?** Baptism means merging, it means the complete yielding of one's self to the purifying power of Christ, it means that the Christian is surrounded by Christ, upheld by Christ, as a fish in a fountain or a boat in the sea. It means so much that to baptize into the name of a man would be the climax of profane folly; only the divine Christ can furnish the reality of which baptism is the symbol.

CHRISTIAN HUMILITY. The central thought of the remainder of chapter 1 and the whole of chapter 2 (studied last week) is that of humility, which was the grace that these Corinthian mischief-makers most needed to cultivate. Paul declares that he was not to preach "in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void," but was to rely solely on the simple story of divine love. "Foolishness," his critics might say; but Paul answered, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." And he went on to declare, "God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; that no flesh should glory before God. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." The Christian worker is not to think of himself, and whether he is failing or succeeding; he is to forget himself in his work, and he is to think only of his divine Master. That is the secret of Christian happiness and of Christian power. This is one of the fundamental lessons for Sunday-school teachers to learn.

"I have often used as an illustration of humility the case of General Speight, whose children live in Waco now. He was a great man in many respects. He was the best organizer and trainer of a regiment I ever knew, and his intellect was as quick as lightning, and yet he could not see how to be converted until his old Negro servant took him off in the gin-house and showed him how to come to Christ." — *President B. H. Carroll, D.D., LL.D.*

"In an address I lately heard, the speaker said that the blessings of the higher Christian life were often like the objects exposed in a shop window, — one could see them clearly, and yet could not reach them. If told to stretch out his hand and take, a man would answer, 'I cannot; there is a thick pane of plate-glass between me and them.' And even so Christians may see clearly the blessed promises of perfect peace and rest, of overflowing love and joy, of abiding communion and fruitfulness, and yet feel that there is something between, hindering the true possession. And what might that be? Nothing but pride." — *Andrew Murray*.

II. THE ONE FOUNDATION, I Cor. 3:1-17. Paul declares that when he was at Corinth, laying the foundations of the church, he was obliged to deal only in the simplest details of Christianity. He fed them with milk, not with meat, for they were only "babes in Christ." Even still they showed by their dissensions and divisions that they had not progressed far in the Christian life. If they had, they would not be saying, "I am of Paul," and "I am of Apollos."

5. **What then is Apollos? and what is Paul?** What are they, that they should be exalted into leaders of divisions of Christ's one church? **Ministers through**

6. I planted, A-pŏl'-lŏs watered; but God gave the increase.

7. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

9. For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.

whom ye believed. "Minister" is used here in its original sense of "servant." Paul and Apollos were not leaders of the church, they were only its serving men. Paul loved to call himself the bond-slave of Christ. **And each as the Lord gave to him.** They had, to be sure, led them to Christ; but they could not do this except as the Lord had empowered them to do it.

6. **I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.** Paul went first to Corinth and sowed the seed; then when he went off to Asia Minor, Apollos came

after and watered the young shoots. "But God — he only, and no other — made it to grow." The planting and watering of Christ's servants were occasions for the exercise of God's vitalizing energy." — *Prof. G. G. Findlay.*

7. **So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.** Nothing, nothing, nothing! — man is nothing. Only God counts. "You think you are something, a person of real importance. But, good friend, look yourself in the face; and unless your vanity has destroyed your sense of humor, I warrant you will smile. Swelled head; nose up in the air; chest all out in front of you; several cubits added to your stature — what a sight for the gods! And all the time you are but a dingy clot of clay, like me." — *Rev. Richard Roberts, D.D.*

8. **Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one.** "They are

one in the nature of their ministry, for both are the servants of the divine will." — *Alford.* **But each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.** Paul and Apollos and all other Christian workers are one in aim and spirit, but Paul would not have us understand that they are the same in ability or in toil or in results. Rewards are proportionate to labor, as a just God determines.

9. **For we are God's fellow-workers.** "Notice the emphatic repetition of 'God,' to whom everything is to be ultimately referred. The church did not belong to this man or to that, but to God. We fall below this truth whenever as leaders we strive for our own ends or as disciples disputatiously exalt one leader above another." — *Principal James Drummond.* This remarkable sentence exalts the human worker even more than the preceding sentences have regarded him as nothing. Though we are weak, foolish, and profitless servants of God, yet he has graciously made us his fellow-workers, and has given us tasks to perform for him that will not be accomplished unless we carry them out. A priceless privilege, though undeserved. **Ye are God's husbandry, God's building.** Paul here changes the metaphor, the new comparison fitting better his purpose in what follows. The church is a field, on which the growth depends mainly on the forces of nature, the soil, the sun, and the rain. It is also a building, in the erection of which God uses human builders to carry out his plan.

10. **According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise master-builder I laid a foundation.** "Wise" is used here in the sense of "skilled." "Masterbuilder" is not the architect, for the Architect of the building is God; the



The Sower,

Millet.

10. According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon.

11. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

21. Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours;

22. Whether Paul, or A-pōl'-lōs, or Çē'-phās, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

word means the foreman of the laborers. Paul did indeed lay the foundation of the church in Corinth, but only as God enabled him to do so; and, indeed, God in Christ was the foundation, as Paul goes on to say. Therefore he takes no credit to himself; he was only carrying out the eternal plan of the Infinite Architect. **And another buildeth thereon.** Foundation is for building; the work is too much for one man. Every Christian worker must look to the future, and see that some one carries on his work. A Sunday-school teacher will raise up pupils who will be teachers in their turn. **But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon.** Even the Perfect Foundation may be ruined in its effect if a faulty building is erected on it. Paul was naturally much concerned about his successors in Corinth: they could easily ruin his work. Let no Christian laborer rest content because his predecessors have made a fine beginning; that beginning will not insure a fine continuance; only the present workers can do that. It is a solemn thought that the success of all the Christian work from the days of Paul to the present is in the hands of the Christian workers of this generation.

11. **For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.** This is why every worker on the building must take heed, for he may be building on the wrong foundation. Some workers to-day are building on worldly philosophy; others are building on personal popularity; others are building on their own ability; still others are building on ambition, or organization, or money. Every edifice erected on such foundations is sure to tumble.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD. The climax of this wonderful passage about the Building is Paul's declaration that every man is a temple of God, in which the Spirit of God dwells. How great should be our reverence for this temple! How careful we should be not to defile it in any way, and not to injure any part of it, but to keep it clean and strong and "meet for the Master's use"! For "if any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy." Indeed the Greek word here translated "temple" means the inner sanctuary of the sacred edifice, the Holy of Holies, where was the ark of the covenant, covered with the mercy seat, over which the golden creatures brooded, while above the mercy seat flamed forth the Shechinah, the blazing light in which Jehovah dwelt. This truth of God's presence in a human life, so often emphasized by our Lord, is illustrated best of all by Christ's own life, and assured us as a blessed possibility by his promises. Let every Christian seek earnestly to attain it.

III. **"ALL THINGS ARE YOURS,"** I Cor. 3:18-4:21. **"LET NO ONE GLORY IN MEN."** These thoughts that Paul has been expressing are exalting thoughts, capable of elevating the human soul to the loftiest heights of experience, to constant communion with God himself. At the same time they are humbling thoughts, for who is equal to these things or worthy of them? Right here, therefore, Paul inserts a caution against pride. We are not to deceive ourselves with our imagined wisdom. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." The Corinthian disputers had been puffed up with worldly wisdom, they had not been awed and humbled with divine wisdom.

21. **Wherefore let no one glory in men.** "Saying, for example, 'I am Paul's man.'" — *Prof. J. Massie, D.D.* **For all things are yours.** Why therefore take only a part of them for yours?

22. **Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas.** "The man who held to Paul and would learn nothing from Apollos or Peter was defrauding himself of his rights. It has been the weakness of Christians in all ages, and never more than in our own, to see good in only one aspect of truth and listen to no form of teaching but one. Each limits himself to his own fortress, which he thinks he can defend, and starves himself on siege rations while the fields wave white with grain outside. The eye is con-

23. And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

structed to sweep round a wide range of vision; but men put on blinkers, and decline even to look at anything which does not lie directly in the line of sight. 'All things are yours,' not this teacher or that, in whom you glory, but all teachers of Christ." — *Marcus Dods*. Or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours. Death is ours, for Christ has conquered it for us. "In Christ, death becomes a possession, as the *right of way* between things present and things to come." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent*. The world, and our life in it, and all the things of the world, belong to us so far as they will minister to our happiness and usefulness. The Christian has learned with Paul, in whatever state he is, therein to be content. And things to come are ours, what eye has not seen or ear heard or heart imagined of eternal bliss.

23. And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. "Even Christ is not existing apart and for himself (compare John 5: 19-30), but is forever united and conjoined with his faithful ones in the God and Father of all. 'I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' John 17: 23." — *Cambridge Bible*.

FAITHFUL STEWARDS. All things are ours, writes Paul at the conclusion of chapter 3; therefore let us be good stewards of all these treasures of divine riches, Paul urges at the beginning of chapter 4. "Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

The Christian has received many blessings. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Our duty is to accept all things humbly, and so to use them as to serve and please the loving Giver.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN POWER. It is our duty and high privilege to be faithful stewards of all that God has bestowed on us in so great abundance; but how can we do it? Who is wise enough and strong enough and possessed of enough grace to make fit use of his blessings and his opportunities? Only the one who seeks and obtains the power of God. "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Teaching is inadequate without this power, though it be the wise and eloquent teaching of a Paul, an Apollos, or a Peter. Let all of us who teach in the Sunday school do it not in our own strength but in the power of God; then when the Lord shall come, "and bring to light the counsels of the hearts," each teacher shall "have his praise from God." Thus our lesson ends as it began on the note of humility. It is a low note but very sweet, the very foundation note of the celestial harmony.

LESSON XIII. — September 23.

THE CHRISTIAN BASIS OF TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

(TEMPERANCE LESSON.) — I Corinthians 8: 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good.* — I COR. 10: 24.

Devotional Reading: Rom. 14: 13-21.

Primary Topic: HELPING OTHERS TO KEEP GOD'S LAW.

Lesson Material: I Cor. 8: 1-13.

Memory Verse: We know that the law is good. I Tim. 1: 8 a.

Junior Topic: HELPING OTHERS TO KEEP GOD'S LAW.

Lesson Material: I Cor. 8: 1-13.

Memory Verse: I Tim. 1: 8 a.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.

Topic for Young People and Adults: THE CHRISTIAN STANDARD OF SOCIAL CONDUCT.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes need to learn the lesson of consideration for those that are

weaker — their younger brothers and sisters, their schoolmates that are not so bright as they are, the children who are awkward and backward in social gather-

ings, poor children, the children of immigrants. Emphasize also for them the lesson of total abstinence for the sake of others.

The Older Classes need to apply this lesson of consideration for weaker brothers and sisters in many directions : in regard to the prohibition problem especially, but also in regard to those who have not had much education, those who have not enjoyed the best social privileges, the poor, the physically handicapped, foreigners who do not know our ways, and all others who need our practical sympathies.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How can Christian people frustrate the efforts to bring back the saloon ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians was written near the end of his three years in Ephesus, A.D. 53-56.

Place. — The letter was written at Ephesus, the capital of Asia Minor.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on First Corinthians referred to in the last lesson. Joseph Parker's *People's Bible*. Bonar's *Light and Truth*. Hodge's *1st Corinthians*. Boise's

Notes on the Epistles of Paul. Findlay's *Epistles of Paul the Apostle*. Upshaw's *Clarion Calls from Capitol Hill*. Warner's *Social Welfare and the Liquor Problem*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The early Christian's contacts with idolatry.
Temptations besetting the early Christians in heathen lands.
Temptations and difficulties of Christian converts to-day in idolatrous lands.
New Testament declarations of the unity of God.
New Testament references to stumblingblocks.
Christian care for the weak.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Argument for Total Abstinence.

I. CHRISTIAN LIBERTY, vs. 1-6.

Knowledge and love.
No idol is anything.
"I can drink or let it alone."

II. THE PROBLEM OF THE OTHER MAN, vs. 7, 8.

Weak consciences defiled.
Weak wills tempted.
The peril of the saloon.

III. THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM, vs. 9-13.

Liberty become a stumblingblock.
Sinning against brothers.
The privilege of total abstinence.

I. Now concerning things sacrificed to idols : We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.

I. **CHRISTIAN LIBERTY**, vs. 1-6. With chapter 8 Paul enters upon a new division of his letter, dealing with various disorders in the Corinthian church. The first is the burning question of whether a Christian should eat meat that had been offered as a sacrifice to some idol, and then, in whole or in part, sold in the public market as part of the priest's prerogative, or consumed by the person offering the sacrifice with his family and his friends, the fat only being burned on the altar. This question, which seems at first sight to have no practical relation with us of to-day, is in its essence precisely the question that many a Christian faces with reference to total abstinence, and for that reason is chosen as the text of our temperance lesson.

1. **Now concerning things sacrificed to idols.** At the first church council, held in Jerusalem (see the lesson for August 12), the rule was laid down that the Gentile Christians should not eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Why does not Paul here refer to that historic deliverance ? In the first place, because it referred to Gentile Christians, and he would discuss the matter on the broadest grounds, with reference to Jewish Christians as well as Gentile. In the second place, because the council in Jerusalem may have been held as rendering a decision applicable only or especially to the church at Antioch or at most to the churches in Syria and Asia Minor. In the third place, because the Jerusalem law was promulgated as a matter of authority and compromise, and Paul wished to establish a general principle, firmly based on Christian love. That principle holds good to-day, and applies to many matters besides the question immediately at issue. **We know that we all have knowledge.** Every Christian knows what an idol is, i.e., that it is nothing, and therefore that offering meat before it is nothing, does not affect the meat in any way. Christianity has opened our eyes to this truth. **Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.** We have knowledge, but we must not rely on that alone. There is something better than knowledge, namely, love. Knowledge will inflate a man with pride, but love will build a man up in brotherly sympathy and co-operation, making

2. If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know;
3. But if any man loveth God, the same is known by him.
4. Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is *anything* in the world, and that there is no God but one.
5. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many;
6. Yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.

him a vital part in the great temple of God, together with his brothers. Paul seems to be getting ready for the great thirteenth chapter on Christian love.

2. **If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know.** "The knowledge which puffs up is not true knowledge. Paul here teaches that, with regard to a large class of objects, knowledge without feeling is nothing; it supposes the most essential characteristics of the object to be unperceived. If a man is proud and conceited, he is ignorant. He does not apprehend the true nature of the objects which he pretends to know. He does not see their vastness, their complexity, their majesty and excellence. These are the attributes of religious truths which are the most essential, and without the apprehension of which they cannot be known." — *Charles Hodge*.

3. **But if any man loveth God, the same is known by him.** Love is the organ of knowledge, and we know most about those things and persons that we love the most. But note that Paul does not speak of our knowledge of God, but of God's knowledge of us. We might be proud of our knowledge of God, but the fact that God knows us makes us humble. It is pride which Paul is warning the Corinthians against, and especially the pride of knowledge.

4. **Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is *anything* in the world.** It is a mass of stone or wood or metal; but it is not called that, it is called a god, and such it certainly is not. Since therefore the idol is merely a figment of the fancy, an empty unreality, sacrificing an animal to it does not change the meat in any respect; it is just what it was before. **And that there is no God but one.** This is the great central affirmation of the Jewish, Moslem, and Christian religions; in that they are a unit. The revealed doctrine of the Trinity does not in the least contravene this truth of the unity of the triune God.

5. **For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth.** The gods in heaven are the sun, moon, planets, and stars, worshipped by the heathen; the gods of earth are the idols and other objects worshipped, such as sacred trees, rivers, mountains, and animals. **As there are gods many, and lords many.** That is, as Paul has just said, those that are *called* gods, and worshipped as lords. They were virtually innumerable in the heathen religions.

6. **Yet to us there is one God, the Father.** The one God is the Father of all beings, the Source of all power, the Creator of all things. Whatever is, comes from him, and he is the Self-Existent. His name is Jehovah, the "I Am." **Of whom are all things, and we unto him.** Men should live for God, who made them for himself, that he might enjoy them, love them, companion with them, receive from them the worship and praise which are his due. **And one Lord, Jesus Christ.** "Some want a Christ who is not God; others a Christ who is not a sacrifice; a Christ without a cross, and without blood; a Christ who will teach but not expiate sin; a Christ whose life and death are an example of self-surrender to the utmost, but not an atonement; a Christ who is not a judge, nor a lawgiver, nor a priest, and only a prophet in the sense of teacher. Thus in the present day there are many Christs. It has been so all along; only the apostle John calls them not *Christs* but *Antichrists* — 'many Antichrists.' To us there is but one Christ, he who proclaimed himself as come to seek the lost," — *Horatius Bonar*. **Through whom are all things, and we through him.** "God the Son, the eternal Word or Reason of the Father, is the Agent by whom he works in the creation, preservation, redemption, regeneration of all things. Compare John 1:3, 10; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2." — *Prof. J. J. Lias*.

7. Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

"I CAN DRINK OR LET IT ALONE." "After all, we must consider the weak conscience. Weakness governs the world; it is always the minority that rules, although if you were to say so in a public meeting you would be hooted from the platform. But it is always the minority that rules. It is weakness that stops the house; it is the baby that keeps the family at home; it is the lame limb that detains all the faculties and says, 'Stop!' What! am I to stop because I have one lame limb? I am sound in all my other limbs, and sound in all my mental faculties, and am I to be humbled in this way? Yes, you are, and you cannot get out of it. So the apostle says, 'Here is a lame man in the church, and the church must wait for him'; and the church says, 'This is a singular pass we have come to, all waiting for one lame man.' The apostle says, 'That is the very idea of the church.' The whole universe may be waiting for one little lame world called the earth: nobody can tell how fast the universe might get on but for this cripple called the earth. Nobody knows how great the family might have been and how wonderful in fame and influence but for the sick-chamber. The apostle says, 'Here is one poor man; call him weak, do not let him be under the impression that he is strong; let him know exactly what he is, and tell him that it is to his weakness we make this obeisance.' What is the use of your standing over a little baby, and pouring upon its unconscious head a whole Niagara of rhetorical expostulation? The thing is impossible. So the apostle said, 'We must wait for this man; he is a man, he is not much of a man, he is about as little of a man as it is possible to be and yet be a man; but Christ died for him, therefore we must wait. Now,' says the apostle, 'I will tell you what I will do; I dare not say anything to anybody else, but this is my position. I can eat this meat; it is nothing to me that the meat has been offered by some heathen priest to a heathen idol; I do not care for that for one moment: but there is a man just there, who says he would be hurt in his soul if I took it. I say, 'Very well, I will not take it.' That is the ground on which all total abstiners from innocent things must rest, if the action is to be widely influential. Many a man says, 'I could take this wine, I should know exactly when to give over, it would do me no harm, I could take it with a good conscience; but if I did take it, there is a poor soul that could not even inhale the odor of the wine without the appetite fired as from hell. I say, 'Very well, I throw it on the ground, I will not touch it, for your sake.' That argument can never be overturned; and if there be a man who never does anything for any other man's sake, let him not name the name of Christ." — *Joseph Parker.*

"After going over carefully all the scientific evidence that recent years have produced regarding 'moderation,' Horsley concludes that 'it is quite impossible to state that any given minimal amount of the drug is harmless.' A popular medical writer conservatively applies the new evidence to the practical every-day question when he says that 'to take alcohol habitually, *in any quantity whatever*,' is to that extent a menace to the user; that whoever assumes that he is the exception, that for him there is a small 'safe' amount, will undoubtedly exceed it at times. The example of Dr. Charles W. Eliot, ex-president of Harvard, who, after taking a glass of wine occasionally at social functions throughout most of his life, quit it in old age on the basis of these new scientific discoveries, and became an advocate of total abstinence, is well known." — *Harry S. Warner.*

II. THE PROBLEM OF THE OTHER MAN, vs. 7, 8. Paul has set forth the principle of Christian liberty based on Christian knowledge. He realized that an idol was nothing, and that knowledge left him free, so far as he himself was concerned, to eat meat that had been offered to idols. Thus a man to whom alcohol offers no temptation, who has a strong will and whose passions are under strict control, feels free, so far as he is himself concerned, to indulge in intoxicating liquors. But another principle comes in, which modifies and restricts this "personal liberty," and which Paul proceeds to declare.

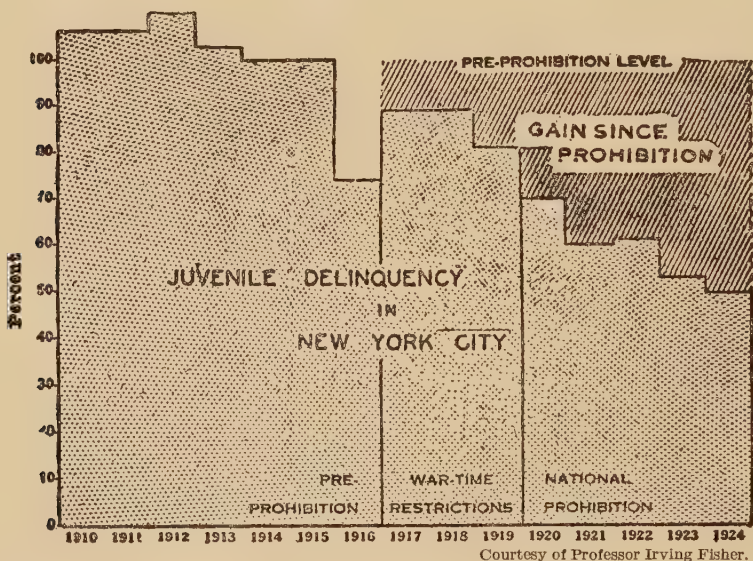
7. Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge. Some have not gained the clear understanding of the nothingness of idols and of all that belongs to the worship of idols. Idolatry still means something to them. But some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol. They have been idolaters so long that idolatry has become instinctive; reason denies it but feeling still adheres to it.

8. But food will not commend us to God: neither, if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better.

They *know* that idol meat is no different from other meat, but they cannot get over the *feeling* that it *is* different. And their conscience being weak is defiled. Their conscience is weak in the sense that it is not governed by reason, by revelation, by their religious teachers, by the judgment of the church, but by their ingrained emotions and instinctive feeling. The sense of eating sacrificial meat would bring back upon them in a flood all the old superstition and fear and passion and lust which had led them into countless heathen orgies, and they would be plunged into the pit of their former defilement.

8. But food will not commend us to God. God is a spirit, and commends the spiritual in us: not what we eat, but how we eat. Do we eat and drink purely, thoughtfully, sanely, with self-control? Do we eat and drink to the glory of God? Neither, if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better. "The thought is, there is no moral quality either in eating or in refraining from food." — Prof. James Robinson Boise.

THE PERIL OF THE SALOON. The dangers of idolatry against which Paul was warning the Christians of Corinth were quite parallel to those of the saloon. Both make their appeal to the senses. Heathen temples were houses of ill fame, and such houses go hand in hand with saloons. Both heathenism and the saloons cultivate abominable habits which become fixed on a man so that he cannot break away from them. Both the saloon and the heathen temple gain much of their power from their social aspects, and would soon lose their influence if their devotees were



Courtesy of Professor Irving Fisher.

Juvenile Delinquency is Cut in Half in New York City.

No safeguard against the so-called crime wave in the rising generation has yet been found which seems more effective than Prohibition. For the sake of the city's children, drink must go. For every life shown saved in this chart is worth many years of the future. The probable expectation of life of the average adult saved by Prohibition and the saving in the lives and morals of the young have increased with every year of Prohibition.

compelled to go one by one, with no banquets or "treating." The heathen temple and the saloon are alike in fostering a large and powerful class whose personal interests are involved in the perpetuating of an evil institution. Just as the temple priests, the "vestal virgins," the sellers of shrines, and all the many other groups tributary to idolatry combined to fix idolatrous habits on their victims, so a mighty combination was formed by saloonkeepers, brewers, distillers, bottle-makers, cask-makers, and every one else who profited by the saloon, not by any means forgetting

9. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak.

10. For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

the men put into office by the saloon vote and the newspapers and other periodicals which were largely supported by liquor advertisements. This influential class of "wets" is still at work, spending vast sums of money in the attempt to fool the American people on the plea of "personal liberty," to make them think that prohibition is a failure, and persuade them to allow in some form the diabolical traffic in intoxicants. Our country is not yet free from the threat of the saloon.

"Talk about regulating a drinking saloon! You might as well try to regulate a polecat in a Maryland swamp or a Georgia forest. There is just one way to regulate the liquor traffic, you must regulate it as you would regulate a rattlesnake — smash its head forever more with national constitutional prohibition, and then leave not one camouflaged beer saloon on the American continent as an open door for all the evils of drink, a saloon that will rob labor of its honest toil, strike the crust from the lips of many a starving child, drive the roses from the cheeks of a one-time happy wife and mother, stifle the music in countless thousands of American homes, and then seek to continue its defiant wreckage by corrupting our politics and making cowards of the politicians that stand sponsor for its trail of slime and crime." — *Hon. William D. Upshaw*.

THE SALOON SPEAKS. "How strange! But yesterday busy street-corners were mine. Old men came and young, weak men, broken men, rich men and poor, decent men and criminals. What a clearing-house was I! And now, millions of children have never smelled my breath or taken the other side of the street to avoid my doors. Yet a few years, and I shall be known no more in the homes of the brave and the land of the free.

"It is a disturbing thought. I must come back. I will put on the armor of light wines and beers. I will revive ancient songs of personal liberty. I will again seek to debauch lawmakers, judges, and police. Instruction in the effects of alcohol, which led to my undoing, is less vigorous now. The memory of neglected children is less sharp. Years of industry have given new wealth to exploit. Perhaps I can even yet get a foothold. I will begin in the cities. While good men sleep I will get in my work among the poor and the ignorant. I have learned much of human frailty. Perhaps by knowledge of human weakness I may again have a place on busy street-corners. I would come back. I am the saloon." — *Joy Elmer Morganin, The Christian Endeavor World*.

III. THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM, vs. 9-13. The problem is this: how is the Christian's liberty to do what his reason tells him will not do any harm to himself to be reconciled with the weakness of the other man who would be harmed if the Christian should exercise his liberty? The apostle had a very ready solution, one which he gladly used for himself and earnestly recommended to others, one which the Christian world has adopted as at least the correct solution of the problem, even though it may not always adopt the solution in its own practice.

9. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak. "The 'stumblingblock' is an obstacle thrown in the way of 'the weak,' over which they may stumble into a moral fall, not having the strength either to overcome their scruples or to disregard an example contrary to their conscience." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*.

10. For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple. This is Christian liberty carried to the extreme point. Feasts were often given in the heathen temples. A man who has offered an animal in sacrifice invites his relatives and friends to join him in the temple and eat the portions of the meat (usually most of it) that have not been consumed upon the altar. The enlightened Christian is shown as joining in such a party as a social courtesy and pleasure, not seeing in it any religious significance whatever. Will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? "Emboldened" is literally "built up," an ironical expression. "A ruinous upbuilding." — *John Calvin*. That would be "edifying" with a vengeance!

11. For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died.

12. And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ.

13. Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.

11. For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died. He is a brother, and so should be cared for tenderly by you. Christ died for him, and so you should certainly at least live for him. And you cause him to perish eternally ! What are you but a fratricide ? " There is no greater sin than to tempt weak or ignorant Christians to thoughts or acts which their ignorance or weakness cannot entertain or do without damage to their religion. There is much need for laying that truth to heart in these days. Both in the field of speculation and of conduct, Christians, who think that they know so much better than ignorant believers, need to be reminded of it." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

12. And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. Over and over, our Lord identified himself with the weak believer, the beginner in the Christian life. He declared that " whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea " (Matt. 18 : 6 ; see also Matt. 25 : 40, 45). This terrible death would be a rich gain for those that are trying to bring back the saloon, rather than that they should thus sin against Christ in sinning against his weak brethren.

13. Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble. Any meat, and not merely meat offered to idols. For his weak brother's sake, Paul was ready to " go the limit " in denying himself. Rather than risk impeding the Christian course of any one, he would do without all meat forever. **I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.** This is a grand declaration, one of the noblest in the Bible. " In theory Paul was for freedom, but in practice for self-denying strictness." — *George G. Findlay*. He knew his rights as a Christian, — none better, — but for the sake of the weaker brethren he refused to stand on them.

THE PRIVILEGE OF TOTAL ABSTINENCE. When compared with Paul's splendid abnegation of his liberty for the sake of his tempted brethren, how contemptible is the talk about " personal liberty " we hear constantly from the opponents of prohibition ! They know perfectly well what a terrible temptation the very sight and the least whiff of alcohol is to the frenzied nerves of a former drunkard or a man who has inherited a tendency to drink ; yet selfishly, for their own indulgence which may be safe for them — comparatively, — or for the sake of a few dirty dollars, they would put in that man's way a temptation which they know means his ruin, body and soul, and the unutterable sorrow of all near to him.

"Said the Man to the Saloon-keeper, 'Your work malevolent
Increases all my taxes full seventy-five per cent.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal liberty!'"

"Said the Man to the Saloon-keeper, 'Your execrable trade
Is teaching all my rulers their own laws to evade.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal liberty!'"

"Said the Man to the Saloon-keeper, 'My heart is full of woe,
For I see your wretched victims whatever way I go.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal liberty!'"

"Said the Man to the Saloon-keeper, 'Your pestilent decoy
Is capturing and maddening and ruining my boy.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal liberty!'"

"Said the Man to the Saloon-keeper, 'I'll exercise right soon
My "personal liberty" to smash your vile saloon.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal fiddlesticks!'" — *Amos R. Wells*.

"As the Arctic voyager who has been frozen up all winter does not seize the first opportunity to escape, but waits till his weaker companions gain strength enough to accompany him, so must the Christian accommodate himself to the weaknesses of others, lest by using his liberty he should injure him for whom Christ died." — *Marcus Dods*.

LESSON XIV. — September 30.

REVIEW: PAUL THE MISSIONARY.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Christ liveth in me.* — GAL. 2:20.

Devotional Reading : Phil. 4 : 4-8, 19, 20.

Primary Topic : STORIES OF PAUL.

Lesson Material : Phil. 4 : 4-8, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : My God shall supply every need of yours. Phil. 4 : 19.

Junior Topic : PAUL THE BRAVE MISSIONARY.

Lesson Material : Phil. 4 : 4-8, 19, 20.

Memory Verse : Phil. 4 : 19.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL THE DAUNTLESS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : "IN LABORS MORE ABUNDANT."

We give below six different plans for Review Sunday, in order that teachers may use the form best adapted to their respective classes, or perhaps combine different features of these reviews in their own plan.

I. A POINTER REVIEW.

Using the series of Lesson Pictures issued by the publishers of this volume, teachers of Primary classes may base the review upon them. Take a screen and fasten the pictures upon it in the right order. Carefully prepare a series of questions on the lessons of the quarter, making each very simple and clear, and furnishing about six questions for each lesson. Take pains to make each question independent of the others, so that it will be readily understood when taken by itself. Write each question on a separate slip of paper and shuffle them all up together. In the class the questions will be laid, writing downward, on the table, and the pupils will take turns in drawing one. It will be read aloud by the pupil or the teacher, and then the pupil will answer it, at the same time indicating with a pointer the picture which belongs to the lesson with which the question is connected. If there is time, go over the questions a second time in the same way.

II. A VERSE REVIEW.

In preparation for this review the teacher will go over the lessons of the quarter, copying out from each lesson its most significant verses, placing each verse on a separate slip of paper, except that sometimes a verse may not be complete in itself and may need a part or the whole of the following verse to finish the thought. Place these slips of paper face down on the table, mixing them thoroughly. The pupils are to draw each slip in turn. The verse will be read aloud by the pupil, who will tell all he can about it, the teacher asking questions to bring out facts that the pupil may not give. After a very few verses have been treated in this way, the pupils will get along without questions.

III. A CHAMPION REVIEW.

For this review the teacher will prepare a large number of questions on the quarter's lessons, making each complete in itself — questions of all kinds, relating to persons, places, events, sayings, teachings, and so on. From six to ten questions should be written on each lesson. Each question will be written on a separate slip of paper, and the whole, after shuffling, will be thrown into a basket. Appoint two "heads" and have them take turns in choosing members for their "sides." First one side will put forward a contestant, who will draw questions from the basket one at a time, reading each question aloud and answering it. He will draw no more than six. If he fails on any question, he ceases to be a contestant, but if he answers all correctly he has succeeded in the "preliminaries," and remains a possible champion. Then some one of the other side takes his turn, and so down the line. Those who remain contestants on each side will next draw six more questions apiece, and so it will continue till each side is narrowed down to one champion. Then in the "finals" the two champions will draw questions alternately until one of them fails. Of course if one side loses all its contestants in the preliminaries, it is defeated, and all remaining on the other side may contest with one another for the championship.

IV. A CHRISTIAN SOLUTIONS REVIEW.

Our quarter's lessons have introduced a large number of important problems which are vital to-day, and have indicated the Christian solution of each. It will be well in the older classes to review these fundamental topics, each being assigned to a different student for discussion. Here is a suggested list :

- Lesson 1.* What features should be included in an ideal education ?
- Lesson 2.* How far should we go in opposition to bigotry ?
- Lesson 3.* How can we know when one is " soundly converted " ?
- Lesson 4.* To what extent should every Christian preach Christianity ?
- Lesson 5.* Who should go to the foreign mission fields ?
- Lesson 6.* What is the missionary spirit ?
- Lesson 7.* How far should we carry compromises in regard to religious differences ?
- Lesson 8.* How can one know whether one is divinely led or not ?
- Lesson 9.* How can we obtain peace and confidence for times of difficulty and danger ?
- Lesson 10.* What should be the Christian's attitude toward the Bible ?
- Lesson 11.* What harm comes to the church from jealousy ?
- Lesson 12.* How far may we wisely go in order to keep the church united ?
- Lesson 13.* When should a Christian surrender his personal rights ?

V. A TRAVEL REVIEW.

Draw, or get some pupil to draw, a large outline map showing Paul's journeys thus far. Insert the boundaries of countries, the rivers and mountain ranges, and dot in the cities, but do not put any lettering on the map. Mount the map on a large board. Print the names of the different cities visited by Paul, from Tarsus on, using oblong bits of cardboard through each of which you will thrust a long pin, making a little banner. The pupils will take turns sticking these into the map at the proper places. Have a pupil take a colored string and extend it from pin to pin to mark out Paul's journeys, using a string of a different color for each journey. Prepare little banners (this series will have a distinctive color) each marked with the name of some person or a word or two indicating some event. The pupils will take turns sticking these into the map at the proper places ; thus " Earthquake " will be placed at Philippi, " Mars' Hill " at Athens, " Man from Macedonia " at Troas, and " Stoning " at Lystra.

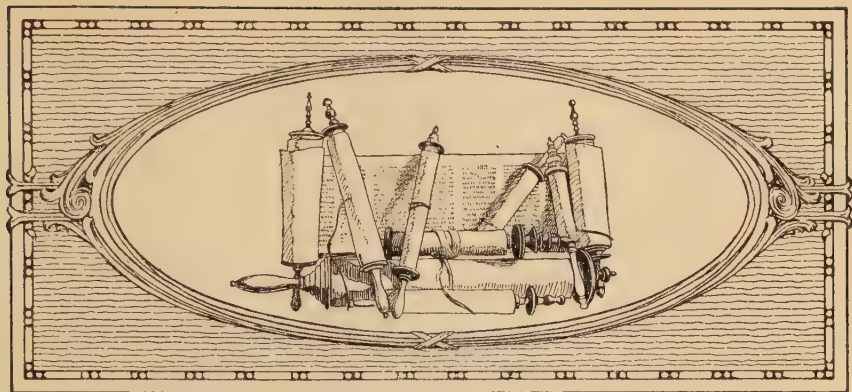
VI. A TYPE REVIEW.

For this review, which is suited to the older classes, a series of essays will be written each describing a different type of Christian who has been encountered in our lessons. Thus some one will write an account of " The Generous Christian " (Barnabas) ; " The Timid Christian " (John Mark) ; " The Well-Educated Christian " (Timothy) ; " The Helpful Christian " (Luke) ; " The Enterprising Christian " (Lydia) ; " The All-Around Christian " (Paul) ; " The Sagacious Christian " (James) ; " The Cautious Christian " (Ananias of Damascus), and so on, the teacher adding enough for the members of his class. Divide the time according to the number of essays, and insist that each shall be kept within its time limit.



ST. STEPHEN.

PHILIP DE CHAMPAIGNE



FOURTH QUARTER.

OCTOBER 7 — DECEMBER 30, 1928.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL.

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX-MONTHS COURSE.)

LESSON I (* 15). — October 7.

PAUL IN EPHEBUS. — Acts 19 : 1-41; Ephesians 4 : 1-16.

PRINT Acts 19:8-10, 18-20; Eph. 4:11-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.* — EPH. 2 : 10.

Devotional Reading : Eph. 3 : 14-21.

Primary Topic : PAUL'S BRAVERY AGAINST A CROWD.

Lesson Material : Acts 19 : 1-41. **Print** Acts 19 : 8-10, 23-31.

Memory Verse : Be strong and of good courage. Josh. 1 : 9.

Junior Topic : PAUL'S BRAVERY AGAINST A CROWD.

Lesson Material : Acts 19 : 1-41. **Print** Acts 19 : 8-10, 23-31.

Memory Verse : The Lord is my light and my salvation,

Whom shall I fear? Ps. 27 : 1.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : OUTGROWING SUPERSTITION.

Topic for Young People and Adults : GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes study especially the striking story of the riot in Ephesus and Paul's bravery in wishing to face the crowd. The teacher will bring out the times in modern life when boys and girls must face ridicule and opposition for Christ's sake. These times are numerous in the school, on the playground, in athletics, and so on.

The Older Classes have a chance in this lesson to note Paul's emphasis on doctrine and to discuss the function of

reason and of clear thinking in the religious life. Paul's work in Ephesus was a long struggle against superstition. Our modern world has not outgrown superstition by any means, and this lesson affords an opportunity to combat it in some of its many forms. Make a special study of the noble Epistle to the Ephesians. Ask the members of the class to read it through during the week and to copy out the most inspiring sentences to read to the class.

Question Suggested for Discussion : How can we most effectively destroy the superstitions of to-day ?

* Numbers in parentheses are the continuation numbers of this six-months course of lessons.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians probably during his first Roman imprisonment of two years, A.D. 61, 62.

Place. — Rome, where Paul, though a prisoner, was living in his own hired house.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul's reliance on reasoning in his evangelism.
References to magic in the Bible.
Illustrations of the mob spirit from the New Testament.
Ephesus, past and present.
Characteristics of the Epistle to the Ephesians.
Great passages in the Ephesians.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Banks on Ephesus in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Chapman's *Received Ye the Holy Ghost?* David Smith's *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*. Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Findlay in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*.

Robertson's *Epochs in the Life of Paul*. On Ephesians Bennett and Adeney's *Biblical Introduction*, Weddell's *Your Study Bible*, and the standard commentaries. Davidson's *A Good Start*. Griffith-Jones's *Types of Christian Life*.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Outgrowing Superstition.

I. THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY, Acts 19 : 1-10.

Completeness of Christian teaching.
Reasoning and persuading.
The importance of Christian doctrine.

II. CHRISTIANITY CONQUERING SUPERSTITION, Acts 19 : 11-41.

Paul and the exorcists.
Paul and the books of magic.
Paul and the shrines of Diana.
The victory of Christianity over superstition.

III. CHRISTIAN GROWTH, Eph. 4 : 1-16.

The letter to the Ephesians.
Walk worthily.
A fullgrown man.
Growing in Christ.

I. THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY, Acts 19 : 1-10. THE COMPLETENESS OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING. After leaving Corinth (see the lesson for September 9), Paul went to Ephesus for a brief stay, promising to return later. Then he went to Jerusalem to fulfill a vow, journeyed to Antioch and spent some time there, and then set forth from that starting point for his third missionary tour. He began by making an inland journey through the eastern portions of Asia Minor, including those portions of Galatia, Lycaonia, and Phrygia which he had visited before. Then he went westward again, and settled in Ephesus, which he had long desired to evangelize.

Ephesus, in Lydia, was the largest city of the Roman province of Asia, our Asia Minor, and at the same time it was the chief commercial city. Like Corinth, it was precisely the kind of place in which Paul liked best to labor. It was the capital of Ionia, situated not far from the sea on hilly ground, at the mouth of the Cayster and between the rivers Hermus and Meander. The latter stream by its wanderings originated our English verb, to meander.

Immense amounts of mud brought down by the Cayster filled up the harbor, and the commercial superiority of Ephesus passed away. The chief glory of the city, and the source of much of its prosperity, was the temple of Diana. The destruction of this by the Goths in A.D. 262 completed the ruin of Ephesus. Now nothing is left of the city but part of the ancient wall, which was ten and a half feet thick, a huge hole in a hillside where was once the great theater, and foundations indicating where the houses, public buildings, and streets once were. These were uncovered after eleven years of digging through the Cayster mud.

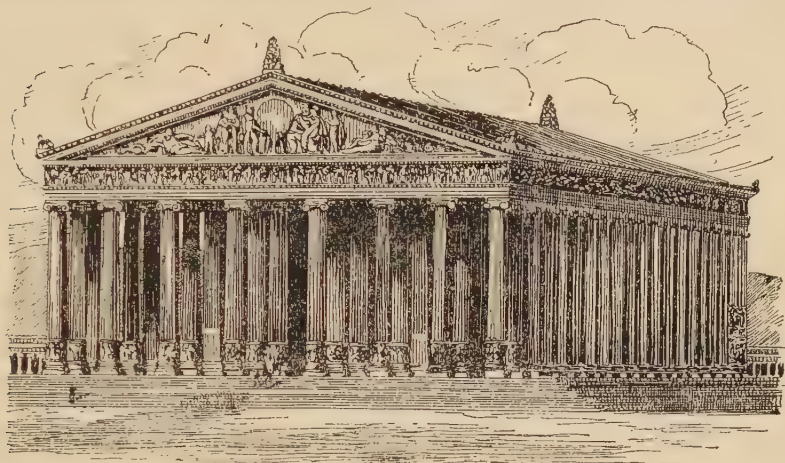
The site of the temple of Diana was discovered almost by chance after six years of exploration. It stood outside the city walls, and its foundation, which alone remains, shows it to have been 425 feet long and 220 feet wide. It had 127 pillars each of which was 60 feet high, and, like all Greek temples, its interior was open to the sky.

This magnificent temple, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, was the treasure house of antiquity, so many valuables being deposited there for safe keeping. "It was also a museum in which the best statuary and most beautiful paintings were preserved. Among the paintings was one by the famous Apelles, a native of Ephesus, representing Alexander the Great hurling a thunderbolt. It was also a sanctuary for the criminal, a kind of city of refuge, for none might be arrested for any crime whatever when within a bowshot of its walls. There sprang up, therefore, about the temple a village in which the thieves and murderers and other criminals made their homes." — *Prof. E. J. Banks*.

Arrived at Ephesus, Paul seems at the outset of his ministry there to have encountered among the Christians a sad ignorance of Christian truth. The able and eloquent Apollos had preceded Paul in Ephesus (Acts 18 : 24-28), a man who was devout and well meaning, but whose theological instruction came from no higher source

ACTS 19: 8. And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading *as to* the things concerning the kingdom of God.

than John the Baptist. Aquila and Priscilla had taught him the full system of the Christian faith, and he went on his way to proclaim it powerfully in Corinth; but about twelve men remained in Ephesus who for some reason remained in the half-light of the original teaching of Apollos. Paul discovered that not only had they not



Temple of Diana Restored.

received the Holy Spirit since their entrance into Christianity, but they were quite ignorant regarding him and his work in human lives; moreover, the baptism which they had received meant to them merely repentance of their sins, not faith in the atonement which Christ had made for their sins and which alone could wash them away. They were baptized again after full instruction, and when Paul laid his hands upon them they received the Holy Spirit, spoke with tongues, and taught the people with prophetic power.

"It is not for a moment to be supposed that they were ignorant of the existence of the Spirit, for they were Jews, and their Scriptures teemed with references to his work. Then, too, they must have heard John speak of him. What they meant, undoubtedly, was that they had not heard of him as the abiding Comforter; and in this they were like many of the church-members of to-day. . . . Nothing could be more important, in these days, than a clear discernment of the character and the work of the Holy Spirit. There is perhaps more ignorance concerning him than any other part of revealed truth. All this must grieve him who as certainly abides with the true child of God as that Jesus died and rose again." — *J. Wilbur Chapman*.

The entire episode is a clear illustration of the value of theology in its fulness and completeness. For our best living we need Christian truth in its purity, and all the Christian truth there is.

REASONING AND PERSUADING. 8. And he entered into the synagogue. In Ephesus, as everywhere, Paul was not deterred by his many experiences of the opposition of the Jewish religious leaders, an opposition conspicuous recently in Corinth, but began his work in the synagogue, well assured that there, in at least a few hearts, he would find soil that would respond most readily to the seeds of Christian truth he would sow. And spake boldly for the space of three months. Paul always spoke boldly, in spite of the sufferings which his bold speech had so often brought upon him. He gloried in the truth of Christ, and could never proclaim it in a half-hearted way. He was the herald of the King, and shouted out his message with conscious authority. Reasoning and persuading *as to* the things concerning the kingdom of God. Paul had reasoned himself into his Christian faith during the three years spent thoughtfully and studiously in Arabia after his conversion. The startling occurrence on the

9. But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyr-än'-nüs.

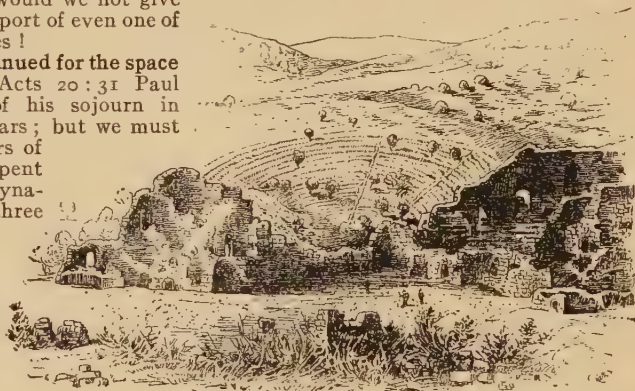
10. And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Damascus road converted him, turned him about, seized upon his will and affections; but his mind had still to be armed with Christian logic. Because he was fully persuaded himself, he was able to persuade others.

9. **But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude.** Christians in the early days were called "men of the Way" (see Acts 9: 2). They believed in him who was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They walked the Way of obedience. They trusted the Way of salvation. "There is little reference in the Book of Acts to the persecutions which Paul suffered at this crisis or indeed throughout his sojourn in the city; but how fierce these were appears from incidental allusions in his correspondence (compare 1 Cor. 15: 32; 2 Cor. 1: 8; 11: 23). His life was in daily peril from the fury of that 'wild beast,' the mob; and it would seem that he was haled before the magistrates and sentenced to scourging and imprisonment." — *Prof. David Smith.* **He departed from them, and separated the disciples.** A separation from the opposing Jews was necessary, lest they should infect some of the disciples with their evil spirit, and in order that the Christians might move forward aggressively as a united body, not held back by association with opponents. We may be sure that Paul did not cease to labor for the conversion of the Jews. **Reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.** Tyrannus is a Greek name, but the possessor of it may have been a Jew. He was probably a philosopher and the "school" was his lecture hall. He may have been a convert to Christianity and have given the use of his hall, or Paul may have hired it as a meeting-place. To this hall, after earning his livelihood by hard work, the apostle repaired faithfully and zealously day after day, meeting all who would come, and giving such talks on the deepest subjects as the world had never heard before or was likely to hear again. What would we not give for a stenographic report of even one of these daily discourses!

10. **And this continued for the space of two years.** In Acts 20: 31 Paul gives the length of his sojourn in Ephesus as three years; but we must add to the two years of this verse the time spent in teaching in the synagogue, which was three months (verse 8), and the time which may have been spent before that in preliminary work, and we have a period which any Jew would describe as three years, being two whole years and a portion of a third. It was one of the longest of Paul's ministries in a single city. **So that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.** "Asia" was the west coast of Asia Minor, including the three little countries, Mysia, Lydia, and Caria. During these two years Paul established the seven churches of Asia, to which, through John's Apocalypse, the Holy Spirit sent the series of wonderful letters (Rev. 2, 3).

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. Christianity does not appeal to blind credulity, to the senses and the passions, or to the crude superstitions of men, as do other religions. Christianity is based on the solid ground of fact and reason. It appeals also to the emotions, but only after reason has been satisfied. Emotions are the fire under the boiler, but facts and reasons are the coal.



Ruins of an Amphitheater of Ephesus.

18. Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds.

19. And not a few of them that practised magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

It is the fashion to decry doctrinal sermons, to scorn the old-fashioned study of Christian evidences, and to rest religion on what we feel rather than on what we know. Such religion is like a house built on the sands. The religion that is to last will be as careful with its facts and arguments and logic as any law court. It will be absolutely scientific in its premises and conclusions. In other words, it will be a Pauline religion.

II. **CHRISTIANITY CONQUERING SUPERSTITION**, Acts 19:11-41. **PAUL AND THE EXORCISTS.** During this ministry in Ephesus the Holy Spirit was so powerfully with Paul that he worked many miracles, and even his garments — his handkerchiefs or the workman's apron which he used while making tents — had efficacy in healing diseases and driving out demons.

There were in Ephesus certain strolling Jews who pretended to cure diseases by means of incantations and magical formulæ, and when they learned of Paul's success in miraculous healing they used in their incantations the name of "the Jesus whom Paul preaches." Among these were the seven sons of a certain Jewish chief priest named Sceva; but when they sought to expel an evil spirit by using the sacred name of the Son of God, the demon answered, "I know Jesus and I know Paul, but who are *you*?" So the demoniac attacked the seven Jews, tore their clothes to shreds, tore their flesh also, and drove them out of the house wounded and naked.

This startling event became known all over the city. It aroused in all a salutary fear of the Lord Jesus, while his disciples rejoiced in having so mighty a Saviour.

PAUL AND THE BOOKS OF MAGIC. 18. **Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds.** Even those who had professed Christianity were not all of them free from the taint of superstition and the practice of sorcery. They had used witchcraft and fortune-telling for so long that it was hard for them to break away from the insidious practice. But this warning in the case of Sceva's sons aroused their sluggish consciences, and they came to Paul with confessions of their sinfulness in meddling with the black arts. Pass through certain streets of any large modern city and you will find almost every house placarded with the signs of clairvoyants, astrologers, "Egyptian" fortune-tellers, and other present-day magicians. Many seemingly respectable people consult them regularly, even professional men and "hard-headed" men of business. We are in no position to point the finger of scorn at these Ephesians.

19. **And not a few of them that practised magical arts.** Included in the phrase are all arts that pretend to supernatural communications, the ability to read the future or to influence in mysterious ways the thoughts and actions of men. Love potions, intended to arouse affection in man or woman; charms to be worn to ward off danger and bring good luck; interpretations of dreams and omens; magic rituals which would cause the death of an enemy; prognostications of fortunate days for sailing or for inaugurating a business venture — all such juggleries were practised then and are practised in much the same way to-day in Christian America. **Brought their books together.** "These books contained magical formulas. Heathen writers often allude to the *Ephesian letters*. These were symbols, or magical sentences written on slips of parchment, and carried about as amulets. Sometimes they were engraved on seals." — *Marvin R. Vincent*. **And burned them in the sight of all.** The tense of the Greek verb implies continuous action, and presents a vivid picture of the penitents throwing book after book on the blazing pile. We are reminded of the similar scene in Florence, when, under the powerful preaching of Savonarola, the "bonfire of vanities" took place in 1497. A great heap of frivolous books and pictures and wearing apparel and the like was consumed. A merchant of Venice offered to buy the pile for 22,000 gold florins before the torch was applied, but the authorities rejected his offer indignantly and added his portrait to the bonfire. **And they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.** Fifty thousand denarii, and as the denarius was the day's wage of an ordinary laborer, the value was about equal to \$100,000 to-day. "The sum is very large, but probably such books would be expensive, and we must take into account in estimating it the immense trade and

20. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

rich commerce of Ephesus, and the fact that we need not suppose that all the Christian converts were to be found only amongst the slaves and poorer classes. Such books would certainly fetch a fancy price." — *Prof. G. G. Findlay.*

20. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed. In proportion as the empty superstitions and foolish practices of the idolaters waned in influence, as just illustrated, the preaching of the cross waxed powerful over men's hearts and lives. The same causes will produce the same effect at all times and in all places; those causes are faith in Christ and whole-hearted devotion to his service.

PAUL AND THE SHRINES OF DIANA. "Paul was in daily peril of his life. He had held his ground at Ephesus longer even than at Corinth. But finally a condition arose that drove him away, a consolation perhaps to many a pastor who has had to leave the scene of former triumphs for Christ. The story does not differ greatly in principle from the greed of the masters of the poor girl in Philippi and the jealousy of the rabbis in Thessalonica. Demetrius carried on a 'god-factory' in Ephesus. He



Terra-Cotta Image of Diana of Ephesus.

Used as a safeguard from shipwreck.

claimed to manufacture the best type of silver shrines of Diana on the market. The preaching of Paul had not only had a bad effect on evil books; it had run down the demand for the wares of the house of Demetrius. His craft and Paul were in direct opposition. Paul had touched the roots of invested capital. Luke has drawn the picture with a master's hand. Demetrius gathered together all the craftsmen of the company and laid before them the danger to their pockets and their piety, and in this order (Acts 19: 27). Their shout took up the appeal to the dignity of Diana as a matter of course. The rest took care of itself. As in Thessalonica, so here they fail to get hold of Paul himself, but do seize two Macedonian friends of Paul, Aristarchus and Gaius. The scene in the vast theater is that of the typical mob. Paul was bent on facing these 'wild beasts,' but he was restrained by the disciples and the Asiarchs. A mob is not very discriminating. They had started out against Paul as a Christian, but he was also a Jew. Now Jews hated idols as did Paul, and somehow their rage got started against the Jews. These put forward Alexander, one of their number, to explain the difference between the Christians and the Jews. But the fact that Alexander showed his Jewish face was enough for the mob. They had been all confusion till now they became unanimous in their shout for Diana against the Jews. After two hours the town clerk quieted the crowd and demanded that Demetrius take his complaint against Paul to the courts of the proconsul. There is also the regular assembly. He rightly called the mob a riot. His speech shows the true insight into the whole business, and that it was mock-

patriotism or mock piety that started it; piety for revenue, in truth. It is plain from Acts 20: 1 that Paul did not tarry long in Ephesus now. It was useless." — *Prof. A. T. Robertson.*

THE VICTORY OF CHRISTIANITY OVER SUPERSTITION. It should be a part of our religion to defy all superstition. A superstitious person discredits his own reason as well as divine revelation. God is ready to guide us at all times, speaking directly to our souls in answer to prayer, and not using such silly agencies as planchette boards, palmists, and tea dregs.

And yet there is a sad amount of superstition among Christians. They avoid starting a journey on Friday. They are uneasy when they see the new moon over their left shoulder. They turn back if a black cat crosses their path. They turn pale if they spill the salt or break a mirror. They will not sleep in a hotel room numbered 13, nor eat with thirteen at the table. Absurd superstitions such as these still, in this scientific age, maintain their hold on supposably intelligent minds.

Our Christianity is not real until it conquers these foolish ideas, drives them completely out of our head and puts Bible truth in their place. It can be done,

EPH. 4: 11. And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12. For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:

13. Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

with Christ's help. Indeed, if he dwells in our lives, we shall have no room for them.

III. **CHRISTIAN GROWTH**, Eph. 4: 1-16. THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS. This Epistle differs from all others in its inscription, for, in the oldest manuscripts, it begins: "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are [at Ephesus]," the two words in brackets being omitted. This fact, together with the general nature of the Epistle, and the absence of Paul's usual personal greetings which would surely have been included in a letter to a church where he had worked so long as in Ephesus, make it certain that the Epistle is a circular letter, probably sent out from Ephesus to the "seven churches of Asia," the name of each church being inserted in this blank left in the copy. The letter was written when Paul was in prison, and probably during his first imprisonment in Rome. It was sent by the hands of Tychicus.

In this letter Paul "rises to the conception of a universal church of which Christ is the head, and he insists on its essential unity realized through the common faith and experience of all Christians." — *Principal Walter F. Adeney*. "In this Epistle we enter the Holy of Holies in Paul's writings." — *Rev. J. W. Weddell, D.D.* "The Epistle to the Ephesians embraces the whole field of the Christian religion." — *Adolphe Monod*. "The Epistle to the Ephesians is one of the divinest compositions of man." — *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*.

WALK WORTHILY. In the first three chapters of the Epistle Paul has dealt with the principles of the Christian life; in the fourth chapter he comes to their application. He sums up his exhortation at the outset: let all Christians, called into the high privileges of the gospel which he has been describing, walk worthily of them: let them be meek and lowly as Christ was; let them be loving and patient with their brethren; let them "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." In harmony with the purpose of the Epistle Paul emphasizes this unity of Christians, using the famous phrase, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Then, after thus insisting on the oneness of all Christians, the apostle speaks of the diversity of abilities and tasks which makes that unity effective.

A FULLGROWN MAN. 11. And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. "He" refers to Christ, who, through the Holy Spirit, bestows spiritual gifts upon his disciples. Apostles are those who are *sent forth* by Christ, his immediate representatives and messengers. Prophets are those who *speak forth* the truth of God, sometimes concerning the future, sometimes concerning the present duties of men. Evangelists are those who proclaim the *good news* (evangel) of salvation and urge men to accept it. Pastors are *shepherds*, those who lead the flock of Christ and care for their needs. Teachers are those who give instruction in Christian truths. There is need for all these types of Christian workers in the church to-day.

12. For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ. "The saints" are all believers on Jesus Christ. They are to be fully equipped for Christian service, that the church, "the body of Christ," may be built up, enlarged, and strengthened. This sentence might well be made the motto of Christian education.

13. Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God. All Christians are to be united in their knowledge of and faith in the Son of God. It is an attainment, for neither knowledge nor faith come of themselves or without effort on our part; but it can be attained by all Christians. **Unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.** Here is an ideal for the Christian to strive after! — nothing less than the best that is possible for him, and that possibility is nothing less than the completeness of life in Christ. The Son of God is to live in us, stimulating our growth in all knowledge and power, until we have become no unworthy image of himself.

14. That we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error;

15. But speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, *even* Christ;

16. From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in *due* measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

14. **That we may be no longer children.** Ignorant and weak as children are, though we are to be like children in our trustfulness and innocence and teachableness, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." **Tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.** We are to have manly minds, minds fixed in their faith, able to give reasons for their beliefs, not minds at the mercy of specious arguers, tossed hither and thither like a ship on a stormy sea. **By the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error.** The word translated "sleight" means literally "dice," "dice-throwing," and so trickery. The Christians are warned by Paul against deceitful advocates of base teachings, who will try to win them to their false doctrines.

15. **But speaking truth in love.** The margin, "dealing truly," gives the other half of the comprehensive Greek word, which implies a thorough devotion to truth, in deed and word. But truth is not enough, great as it is; without love it is cold and barren; with love it is warm and fruitful. **May grow up in all things into him, who is the head, *even* Christ.** Christ is the one aim of the Christian. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life toward which the Christian aspires. Christ is the object of the Christian's love, the embodiment of Christian truth. Christ is the Christian's Head, his guiding Power. He is the Christian's example in all things; and if the Christian can grow like him, he is content.

16. **From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth.** The last clause is literally, "through every joint of the supply." The source of the supply is Christ, with whom the Christian makes contact in many ways, as by prayer, by the Bible, by the church — each of such contacts meaning a new inflow of vitalizing energy. **According to the working in *due* measure of each several part.** The Body of Christ, the Church, has its parts, its limbs, and all must work together harmoniously if the Body is to be healthy, strong, and efficient. **Maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.** This is the way the church grows, and the individual Christian — by taking in the love of Christ, and by showing that love to all men.

GROWING IN CHRIST. If we are not going forward we are going backward. If we are not growing taller in our spiritual lives we are becoming dwarfed. There is no stagnation, if we are Christians.

This is because Christ means growth, and Christ dwells with the Christian. He cannot live in a life that stands still, any more than the sap will flow through a dead tree trunk.

"Self-surrender, teachableness, obedience — these three principles are primary, and at root they are not three, but one and indivisible. By remembering this, and embodying it in our life and character, we shall develop into the full-grown man at last, fearless and yet reverent in thought, intelligent in action, pure and generous in feeling." — *E. Griffith-Jones*.

"There is an old legend of the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, how she went to the Holy Land in order to find the identical cross upon which our Saviour suffered. Excavations were made, and three crosses were found; but how were they to know which was the true one? They brought a human corpse and laid it upon each cross in succession, but as soon as it touched the cross of Christ, it started into life. The fable may be a foolish one, but it has its moral. Ah! my dear brothers, believe me, it is only as you are brought in contact with the Lord Jesus Christ, and with him as a crucified Saviour, that you can know what true life is, and can spring to the ideal of a perfect manhood." — *Rev. J. Thain Davidson, D.D.*

LESSON II (16). — October 14.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS. — I Corinthians 12-14.

PRINT 1 Cor. 12:4-7, 31; 13:1-8, 13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.* — I COR. 13:13.

Devotional Reading : 1 John 4:7-16.

Primary Topic : LOVE IS THE BEST OF ALL.

Lesson Material : 1 Cor. 12-14. Print 13:1-8, 13.

Memory Verse : God is love. 1 John 4:8 b.

Junior Topic : THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.

Lesson Material : 1 Cor. 12-14. Print 13:1-8, 13.

Memory Verse : Love never faileth. 1 Cor. 13:8 a.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE GREATEST OF ALL GIFTS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will have enough to do if they concentrate on the thirteenth chapter, and consider the Christian duty and privilege of loving others. Show the boys that love is the manliest thing in the world, calling out all possible heroism. Show the girls that love is the most beautiful thing in the world, producing all real and permanent loveliness. Ask them to tell how love would improve their school life, their sports, and their homes.

The Older Classes will find these three chapters full of meat. It will be well to assign chapter 12 to one member of the class to bring out its teachings, and chapter 14 to another, keeping the greater part of the time for chapter 13. Get some one to write and read a review of Henry Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World*. Discuss the application of love to present-day problems, such as the relation of labor and capital and the abolition of war.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How would our community be changed if 1 Cor. 13 were practised by every one in it?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians probably near the close of his nearly three years at Ephesus, A.D. 53-56.

Place. — The letter was written at Ephesus, the chief city of Asia Minor.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The plan of First Corinthians.
Bible uses of the human body in comparisons.
Paul's various passages concerning "gifts."
How Christ exalted love.
How Paul exalted love.
Love in the Epistles of John.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Spiritual Gifts.

I. DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS, 1 Cor. 12.

Many gifts but the same Spirit.
One body, many members.
Desire the greater gifts.

II. LOVE, THE GREATEST GIFT, 1 Cor. 13.

Nothing, without love.
What love accomplishes.
The supremacy of love.

III. THE DESIRE FOR SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

1 Cor. 14.

The gift of prophesying.
The gift of tongues.
Things done decently and in order.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Clausen's "*Preach It again.*" Banks's *Common Folks' Religion*. Lewis Campbell's *The Christian Ideal*. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Thompson's *Burden Bearing*. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible* (Corinthians). Woods's *At the Temple Church*. David Smith's *Man's Need of God*. Hanzsche's *The Great Themes of Jesus*. Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World*.

I. DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS, 1 Cor. 12. MANY GIFTS BUT THE SAME SPIRIT.

In his letter to the Corinthian Christians, written by Paul from Ephesus when he heard of the dissensions in the church at Corinth, the apostle deals with many external matters, such as women's veils, and with many matters of church order, such as the celebration of the Lord's supper, but he does not close the Epistle without piercing to the very heart of the Christian life and of church unity, the presence of God's Holy Spirit, and the gifts which he bestows on his people. Of these he would not have the Corinthians ignorant.

1 COR. 12:4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord.

6. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all.

7. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal.

4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. A "gift" is a special ability for service, such as the gift of public prayer, the gift of singing, social gifts, the gift of sympathy, the gift of insight into truth, the gift of teaching, the gift of organization and of administration. These may have been present in a life before conversion, and at conversion have been dedicated to Christ and enriched and strengthened by him. There are other "gifts" which are the direct bestowal of the Holy Spirit on the Christian at or after conversion, such as the gift of soul-winning or the gift of preaching. Every Christian has some gift, and these gifts are as various in degrees and kinds as there are individual Christians; but the same Holy Spirit is the source of them all, filling them with power and directing the use of them to the glory of God and the blessing of men.

5. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. "Ministrations" are gifts in action, and of course they are as diverse and numerous as are the gifts themselves; but the same divine Lord from whom the gifts came directs the employment of them. The Christian worker is in his hands at every turn.

6. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. "Workings" are "activities brought to effect; they are the gifts embodied in the services, and regarded from the point of view of the power in them. The 'energizer' is always God; he is the ultimate source of all spiritual power (Phil. 2:13). He gives the Spirit through Christ." — *Prof. J. Massie, D.D.* God is impartial in his working, and accomplishes "all things in all men," in spite of the diversity of his working.

7. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. Note in the first place that in these verses the three persons of the Trinity are mentioned in close connection, and the doctrine is all the more convincingly set forth because incidentally, showing how intimately it was interwoven with Paul's thinking. In the second place note that the Spirit is given to each Christian not to be hidden, not for secret communion only, but to be manifested, shown to men in his blessed activities, for their comfort, admonition, and guidance. And note in the third place that the object of the Spirit's presence, and of the Christian's manifestation of the Spirit in his life, is the profit of men. The Christian, like his Master, goes about doing good. Strength, cheer, and righteousness radiate from him at all times and in all places; and that not of himself, they are gifts from the Holy Spirit.

That his readers may thoroughly understand what he means by the gifts of the Spirit, Paul proceeds to name the principal manifestations of his presence and power: wise speech, instructive speech, faith, the ability to heal the sick, the power to work other miracles, prophetic insight into the future and into divine truth and into the hearts of men, power to recognize and expose evil spirits, ability to speak other languages miraculously and understand them when spoken by others. Some of these gifts of the Spirit were for the needs of that day alone, while God has given to the Christians of to-day through the Spirit other powers which are fitted to the needs of to-day and which would seem to the Christians of the first century far more wonderful than any of the supernatural gifts which they exercised — for instance, the power to send the word of God through the ether to the lands across the seas.

ONE BODY, MANY MEMBERS. Verses 12-30 constitute one of the most eloquent passages in Paul's writings, and, indeed, in the entire Bible. In these verses Paul represents Christ and his church under the likeness of the human body, with its different members and organs, some honored by us more than others, but all equally necessary, and all honored alike by the Creator of the body. Each part of the body is bound by ties of close dependence to every other part, so that a pain anywhere is felt everywhere in the body, the weakness of any part cripples all parts, and the entire body is thus compelled to care faithfully and solicitously for each of its members.

And so "without others we cannot be made perfect. And it is from losing sight of this that the aspiration after holiness has often been so ineffectual." — *Prof. Lewis Campbell, LL.D.*

31. But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you.

I COR. 13: 1. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

"The relation between the body and the hand and the head is a practical illustration of the Golden Rule. The Golden Rule is to do unto others as we would have them do unto us; that is precisely what takes place in real life between the different parts of the human body in the care exercised over each other." — *Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

Atterbury, of the Pennsylvania Railroad system, "is the man who placed the original emphasis on the first person plural pronoun 'we.' The Pennsylvania was never known as his road. It was not the directors' road, nor the stockholders' road, nor the workers' road. It was OUR road. A good month was OUR good fortune. WE were congratulated when accidents were few.

"They tell a true story of him. An old engineer, after years of clear record, had run into a tragically terrible disaster. The mystery of the accident seemed impenetrable. The old man himself was a pitiable wreck who jabbered meaninglessly. And only he knew what had happened. The trained investigators could get no sensible word out of him. Then Atterbury himself sent for him. The doctor warned Atterbury that an unwise approach to the brooding secret of the man's bewildered mind might turn him into a raving maniac in an instant.

"The door into the private office swung open. The old man staggered in and blinked his eyes in dull slowness of recognition. Atterbury walked over to him, placed a hand on his trembling shoulder, looked him straight in the eye, and without affectation said simply, 'Well, old man, we've had a run of bad luck, haven't we?' No undue emphasis on the first personal plural pronouns. No stressing for dramatic effect. But the poignant sincerity of the sharing was so real that the cloud over the old man's mind was banished, and his eyes gleamed with tears of brotherly confidence as he said, 'Yes, Mr. Atterbury, we have!'

"Then the whole story came rushing forth, as if those two men had known each other all their lives.

"O church of Jesus, I would have you learn the power of we-ness!" — *Rev. Bernard C. Clausen, D.D.*

DESIRE THE GREATER GIFTS. 31. But desire earnestly the greater gifts. Some gifts — it is folly to deny it — are greater than others. The preaching gift of a Spurgeon is greater than the gift of the janitor of his church. Every gift is honorable, and equal fidelity in the use of all gifts is equally honored and rewarded by the Giver of the gifts. We are not to be discontented with the gifts that have fallen to our share, nor to try to rise above the work which God has marked out for us; but we are to be very sure that we are doing our best. Many a Christian is disgracefully satisfied with a silent life when he might make his helpful contribution to the prayer meeting. Many a Christian lets his friend remain outside the church when a few earnest words from him might make his friend a Christian. "Occupy," says Christ. "Fill out the full measure of the lot in which I have placed you." And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you. These words really belong to the next chapter, for the "most excellent way" is the way of love. "Love was the secret which could reconcile an ardent desire for the best gifts with contentment with what one had; which could harmonize the various powers of the individual members of the church for the general good." — *Prof. J. J. Lias.*

II. LOVE, THE GREATEST GIFT, I COR. 13. NOTHING, WITHOUT LOVE. 1. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels. Paul had just been speaking of the miraculous gift of tongues, the ecstatic speech with which Christians were sometimes endowed in those days. The "tongues of angels" may refer to the "unspeakable words, not lawful for a man to utter," which Paul heard when "caught up into Paradise" (2 Cor. 12: 4). But have not love. The rhetoric and eloquence of the most admired orator, if from the brain only and not also from the heart, leave the hearers cold. That is why many a statesman, preacher, Sunday-school teacher, and prayer-meeting speaker have little or no hold upon their audiences: they do not love them. I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. That is, mere empty sound, such as that produced by the gongs and cymbals so much used in the heathen temples. The cymbals especially would imitate the clatter of meaningless "tongues."

2. And if I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3. And if I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

4. Love suffereth long, *and* is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil;

2. **And if I have *the gift of prophecy*.** Power to foretell the future, power to speak forth mighty religious truth — the greatest intellectual power vouchsafed to men, that of an Isaiah or a Phillips Brooks. **And know all mysteries and all knowledge.** This is not a gift separate from that of prophecy, but is the basis and source of it in its two aspects, — vision of the unseen future, insight into the fundamental verities of God and man. **And if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains.** Paul knew of our Lord's saying that even the least amount of faith, faith as small as a mustard seed, would suffice to move a mountain and pitch it into the sea (Matt. 17 : 20 ; 21 : 21). Such faith Paul himself had exercised in working miracles at Ephesus, where he was when he wrote this letter. **But have not love, I am nothing.** A man may be used as the channel of God's power and wisdom, and yet be in himself weak and contemptible, a mere cipher. Love alone allies a man with God and gives divine significance to what he says and does.

3. **And if I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*.** The sentence is literally, "If I give away all my property in mouthfuls," doling it out to prolong as far as possible the exhibition of my beneficence. **And if I give my body to be burned.** Paul imagines himself reaching the highest pitch of self-devotion, a martyrdom by fire. Some ancient manuscripts read here, "If I give my body that I may boast," which, though probably not the true reading, exposes the fruitlessness of the martyrdom. Many a man makes a martyr of himself for self-glorification or through sheer obstinancy. **But have not love, it profiteth me nothing.** If gifts are made to the poor, or a man suffers martyrdom, and there is no love back of the acts, they are prompted by the desire to get some selfish profit, such as men's applause; but, Paul declares, no real profit is gained. The ends of ambition may be attained, but how transitory and hollow they are!

WHAT LOVE ACCOMPLISHES. 4. **Love suffereth long, *and* is kind.** Thus far Paul has set forth the necessity for love, how little can be accomplished by the Christian without it; now he passes to the picture of love in action, what love will do in a human life. It is a beautiful, impassioned utterance, cast in the form of Hebrew poetry, rhythmical and exalted, Paul's Psalm of Love. And first the attribute of patience with trying persons, a patience which is more than mere endurance, rising into active kindness. This is one of the characteristics of God, who is Love (see Rom. 2 : 4). **Love envieth not.** Why should Love envy? He enjoys seeing others possess good things and win high honors even more than he would enjoy them for himself. **Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.** Love is engrossed in admiration of the excellencies of others, and has no time or inclination to admire its own fine qualities, or even to recognize them.

5. **Doth not behave itself unseemly.** The meaning of the Greek is perhaps better expressed in English positively than negatively: "Love is the foundation of good manners, of graciousness, of politeness." Love guides social intercourse when it is on the highest level. Love prompts the most beautiful conduct. **Seeketh not its own.** Paul had already expressed his opinion that the Christian should not be forever standing up for his own rights (1 Cor. 10 : 24, 33), seeking his own advantage. He should be striving for the profit and advancement of others, and they in turn are quite certain to take care of his progress in all good things. **Is not provoked.** The Greek word is the word which appears in English as "paroxysm." The Christian will oppose evil, but he weakens his cause when he makes his opposition to wrong a matter of personal anger and pique. He is to hate wrong but love the wrongdoer. **Taketh not account of evil.** Love will not bear a grudge. It will not say, "I will forgive but I will not forget." On the contrary, it will gladly erase the wrong done from the account book and start with a clean ledger.

6. Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth ;
 7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8. Love never faileth : but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall be done away ; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease ; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall be done away.

13. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three ; and the greatest of these is love.

6. **Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth.** Love is long suffering, not provoked, taking no account of evil ; but this does not mean that it palliates evil, still less that it delights in its success. Love is heart and soul with every true cause, because only as such causes triumph will mankind, whom it loves so ardently, be happy and prosperous.

7. **Beareth all things.** This does not mean that love bears without protest and active opposition the affronts and injuries under which others suffer ; it would not be love if it bore those with meekness and patience. But so far as one's self is concerned, love will bear without complaint the buffets, sneers, and brutalities of the world. They are to be conquered by loving, if at all. **Believeth all things.** Love is no fool. Love does not believe what it knows to be lies. But love is not suspicious, it is eager to believe the best of every one, it would rather be deceived now and then than go through the world doubting his brother men. **Hopeth all things.** Love of men hopes for their success and happiness in the future, as it believes the best of them in the present. Love of God looks forward confidently to the blessings which it knows the loving Father will bestow on his children. **Endureth all things.** There will be much to try love's belief in men and hope for men, but love continues patiently to believe and hope just the same in spite of it all.

8. **Love never faileth.** Literally, "never falls down," slain by all the hindrances and doubts and perplexities that may assail it. These words sum up all that has gone before. **But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall be done away.** The prophecies which are visions of the future will be at an end when that future arrives. The prophecies which are unfoldings of the truth will be needless when the truth itself has become in its fulness a vital part of our being. **Whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease.** In the perfected life we shall have modes of expression and of communication which will altogether supersede our confused, multiplied, and clumsy languages of earth. We do not know how they will operate, but they will do away, we may be sure, with all our lexicons and grammars ; intelligence will speak to intelligence immediately, directly, and unmistakably. **Whether *there be* knowledge, it shall be done away.** "Here our knowledge 'creeps from point to point,' painfully amassing facts, and thence, with many hesitations and errors, groping its way towards principles and laws. Here it is imperfect, with many a gap in the circumference ; or like the thin red line on a map which shows the traveller's route across a prairie, or like the spider's thread in the telescope, stretched athwart the blazing disc of the sun — 'but then face to face.' Incomplete knowledge shall be done away ; and many of its objects will drop, and much of what makes the science of earth will be antiquated and effete. What would the hand-loom weaver's knowledge of how to throw his shuttle be worth in a weaving-shed with a thousand looms? Just so much will the knowledge of earth be when we get yonder." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE. The omitted verses, 9-12, contrast the transient nature of our worldly experiences with the glorious permanency of perfect love to which we may look forward. Earthly knowledge is partial, but heavenly love will be complete, doing away with all in our present lives that is fragmentary and unsatisfying. Our life here is like the crude beginnings of childhood ; the perfected life in which love reigns will be the life of a full-grown soul. Our present life is like the blurred and dim reflection of a face in the mirrors made of polished metal, which were the best the ancients had ; the perfected life will see reality and blessedness, God and Christ, with blessed clearness, face to face. The soul will then know God as distinctly as it is known by its Maker.

13. **But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three.** "But now" might be translated "so then" ; Paul sums up the great chapter in the following words. "Abideth" is singular though it has three subjects, because Paul would have us regard

the three as a unit, just as the Holy Trinity is a unit, hope and love both proceeding out of faith. In contrast to the temporary experiences of which Paul has been speaking, these three are the abiding realities. Faith abides, though in the life of perfect vision, because the heart of faith is trust, and we shall trust God through all eternity. Hope abides, though we shall have attained far more than we ever dared to hope for, because eternity will be an ever-expanding blessedness, and we shall know that richer



Caritas (Charity).

Thayer. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

joys are always ahead of us. And love abides, because love is the very atmosphere and essence of heaven, for heaven is God, and God is love. **And the greatest of these is love.** "There are people who believe that they could have improved this verse by substituting for 'love,' 'compact organization of the visible church,' or 'beauty,' or 'music,' or 'conscience,' or 'zeal,' or 'sound doctrine.'" — *J. R. Thompson*. "Love is the greatest because it is likest God, it interprets God, it makes us like God; it is the end of redemption, and is therefore most beautiful and most peaceful; it is greatest in influence, it secures obedience, it is the source of knowledge; and, finally, love is the greatest because it embraces and harmonizes the rest, it is love that gives faith and hope their very life." — *James Hastings*.

"Oliver Wendell Holmes was once asked if he did not think that Christianity was a failure, and he answered: 'I rather think it has never really been tried.' And he was right. We have tried orthodoxy, we have tried controversy, we have tried persecution, but we have never whole-heartedly ventured on the Lord's sovereign method of loving one another, loving all our fellow creatures, with the love wherewith he has loved us." — *Prof. David Smith*.

"A beautiful, fanciful story is related of Jesus returning to heaven after his earthly abode. Gabriel meets him at the gate. 'What? Are you back so soon?' And Jesus answers, 'Yes, they allowed me to work only three years; then they killed me.' 'Well,' asks Gabriel, 'what plans have you left to carry on your work?' Jesus answers, 'I chose a few ordinary men and I tried to fill them with a love for me and my message; and then I left my message in their hands that they might go out and each in turn win others.' 'But,' asks Gabriel, 'what if they should fail?' Slowly and sadly Jesus answers, 'I have no other plan.'" — *Rev. William Thomson Hantzsch*.

"Covet therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing which it is certain is going to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the universe when all the other coinage of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. You will give yourselves to many things, give yourselves first to Love. Hold things in their proportion. *Hold things in their proportion.* Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character — and it is the character of Christ — which is built around Love." — *Henry Drummond*.

III. THE DESIRE FOR SPIRITUAL GIFTS, I COR. 14. **THE GIFT OF PROPHECYING.** Paul was a great prophet, that is, preacher — the greatest of all prophet-preachers. It is natural that he should value prophesying; if he had not valued it, he could not have exercised the gift so mightily. He valued it (verse 3) for edification, exhortation, and consolation, which are the great ends of all sermons to this day. It is a power for all Christians to reach after. Not that all may become Pauls, but all may, as their powers allow, edify, exhort, and console, if only by teaching little children in the Sunday school — one of the most glorious of all occupations possible for any one!

THE GIFT OF TONGUES. Paul makes it very plain that as compared with prophesying, he values lightly the gift of tongues. Whatever may have been the exact

nature of that ecstatic form of utterance, Paul knew that it required interpreting, and held that without interpretation it could not move the consciences of unbelievers, or win them to Jesus Christ. He would rather speak five words with his understanding, so that he might instruct others, than ten thousand words in a "tongue" (verse 19).

Paul's words have been applied to church music. "However good the music, a musical service is in itself a matter of indifference to God. It is valueless — it may even be worse than valueless — unless it attunes the souls of the worshippers to a deeper and more spiritual expression of their inmost religious aspirations." — *Rev. H. G. Woods, D.D.* Music just for a show or merely for sensuous pleasure, pulpit oratory that is merely to tickle the ears of the audience, Sunday-school teaching that gets no deeper than the facts of history or Bible criticism — such things come under Paul's strictures regarding "tongues."

THINGS DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER. The conclusion of the chapter discusses proper order in the church at Corinth. Let the Christians take turns speaking, and not several speak at once. Let the women there in Corinth, where so many women are shameless, take especial care to be modest and retiring. In short, "let all things be done decently and in order." The church of God should imitate the beautiful system and orderliness of God's creation, the natural world. Inattention in the congregation, restlessness, whispering, giggling, and all irreverence — these are unworthy of Christians, a profanation of the sacred edifice and of divine worship. The church is to be a home for God's people, but it is not to suffer from the familiarity which breeds contempt. Let all pastors, teachers, and parents see to it.

LESSON III (17). — October 21.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP. — 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15.

PRINT 2 Cor. 8:1-9; 9:6, 7, 15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *First they gave their own selves to the Lord.* — 2 COR. 8:5.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 95:1-7a.

Primary Topic: GLAD GIVING.

Lesson Material: 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15. Print 8:1-9.

Memory Verse: God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9:7b.

Junior Topic: GLAD GIVING.

Lesson Material: 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15. Print 8:1-9.

Memory Verse: 2 Cor. 9:7b.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: WHAT IS GOD'S CLAIM ON US?

Topic for Young People and Adults: PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes all join in the school gifts, and should be taught to what their gifts are made and why they are made. The spirit of right giving should be shown them, and they should early be indoctrinated in the right methods. They give in their young people's societies, in their school organizations, make birthday and Christmas presents, and in many other ways practise the art of giving. They are not too early to learn its principles, and this is the best possible opportunity to teach them.

The Adult Classes should discuss quite fully, with Paul's words as a guide, the important questions: To what shall we give? How much shall we give? Why shall we give? What methods of giving shall we use? These four topics

may well be treated by four members of the class, each talk to be followed by a discussion.

Question Suggested for Discussion: How can we increase the gifts of our church to the point at which they will meet Christ's approval and win his praise?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Second Corinthians was written not long after First Corinthians, probably in A.D. 57.

Place. — The Epistle was written in Macedonia, probably in Philippi.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Parker's *People's Bible*, Watkinson's *Moral Paradoxes of St. Paul*, Leighton Parks's *Moral Leadership*, Hanzsche's *The Great Themes of Jesus*, On Second Corinthians, Shaw in *The International*

Standard Bible Encyclopædia; Reed in *The Bible for Home and School*; Lias in *The Cambridge Bible*; Massie in *The New-Century Bible*; Denney in *The Expositor's Bible*; Farrar in *The Pulpit Commentary*, etc. Burrell's *Paul's Letters*. Godet's *Studies on the Epistles of St. Paul*. *Expository Sermons on the New Testament*. Jowett's *God—Our Contemporary*. Nichols's *Sermons*. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible*. "The Penny Ye Meant to Give," in *One Hundred Choice Selections*, No. 14 (Penn Publishing Co., Philadelphia). Good books on Stewardship: Cook's *The Larger Stewardship* (Judson Press); Evans's *The Currency of the Invisible* (Revell); McConaughy's *Money the Acid Test* (Missionary Education Movement).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Bible on generous giving.
The Bible on systematic giving.
The Bible on proportionate giving, especially the tithe.
Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.
Christ's words about giving.
Modern progress in the matter of giving.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Principles of Christian Stewardship.

I. FIRST GIVE YOURSELVES, 2 Cor. 8: 1-9.

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.
The gift of the heart.
Christ an example of giving.

II. RULES OF RIGHT GIVING, 2 Cor. 8: 10-9: 5.

Give according to ability.
Give as a proof of love.
Give as bounty, not extortion.

III. CHEERFUL GIVING, 2 Cor. 9: 6-15.

Bountiful sowing, bountiful reaping.
Enriched unto liberality.
God's unspeakable gift.

I. FIRST GIVE YOURSELVES, 2 Cor. 8: 1-9. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS. The relation between Paul and the church at Corinth furnished one of the severest trials of the apostle's career. We are not told directly about it anywhere, but disclosures are made in this second letter to the Corinthians. It would seem that "after the dispatch of First Corinthians news reached the apostle of a disquieting character; probably both Titus and Timothy, on returning from Corinth, reported the growing menace of the opposition fostered by the Judaizing party. Paul felt impelled to pay an immediate visit, and found only too sadly that matters had not been overstated. The opposition was strong and full of effrontery, and the whole trend of things was against him. In face of the congregation he was baffled and flouted. He returned to Ephesus, and poured out his indignation in a severe epistle, which he sent on by the hands of Titus. Before Titus could return, events took a disastrous form in Ephesus, and Paul was forced to leave that city in peril of his life. He went to Troas, but, unable to wait patiently there for tidings of the issue in Corinth, he crossed to Macedonia, and met Titus, possibly in Philippi. The report was happily reassuring; the majority of the congregation returned to their old attachment, and the heavy cloud of doubt and anxiety was dispelled from the apostle's mind. He then wrote again—the present Epistle—and forwarded it by Titus and other brethren, he



Artist unknown.

St. Paul Takes Leave of Ephesus.

himself following a little later, and finally wintering in Corinth as he had originally planned."—*Rev. R. Dykes Shaw, D.D.* The severe letter referred to has probably not been preserved, as neither Paul nor the Corinthians would wish to keep it, though many modern scholars think we have it in 2 Cor. 10-13, in part if not in whole.

"It is of supreme importance that Paul should vindicate his standing as an apostle, particularly by reason of the fact that he, of all the apostles, was pre-eminently chosen to formulate and systematize the doctrines of the Christian faith. In this Second Epistle to the Corinthians we have that vindication. It is the picture of one of the Lord's mighties standing for the defence of his ambassadorship."—*Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

"In this Second Epistle to the Corinthians we get the fullest insight into the heart of the apostle, so full of tenderness, human and divine."—*F. Godet.*

2 COR. 8: 1. Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia;

2. How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3. For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, *they gave* of their own accord,

The portion of the Epistle which we are to study deals with the collection Paul was making for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. These two chapters constitute "a little treatise which contains almost the whole theory and philosophy of the Christian administration of material wealth." — *Expository Sermons on the New Testament*.

THE GIFT OF THE HEART. 1. Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the **grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia**. Paul had much at heart the collection which he was making for the many Christians in Jerusalem who had been reduced by the persecutions to bitter poverty. He had himself done much to initiate those persecutions, and would make what amends he could. Moreover, he had in mind the suspicion which the stricter Jews who had become Christians entertained of the Gentile Christians, feeling that they had been received into the church on too easy terms; and Paul knew that brotherly gifts would do much to allay those suspicions. Above all, however, was Paul's consciousness that love is at the bottom of true religion, and that nothing would do more to advance in the Christian life the churches he had founded than the outpouring of their hearts in liberal giving. In his first letter to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 16) Paul had spoken of this collection and had given full directions as to the way in which it should be made, which is why the subject is introduced here so abruptly. Now he tactfully stimulates it in Corinth by arousing emulation, telling the Corinthians how well the Macedonian churches had done for the same cause. Those churches were in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. They had responded generously to Paul's appeal, but the apostle will not give them too much credit, for their liberality is the grace of God working in them. Praise for all Christian graces, this among the others, is due to the God of all grace, who inspires them through his Holy Spirit. If we have not the grace of liberality let us pray God to give it to us — and then help him!

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Heb. 10: 24). Here we get the law of emulation redeemed from all ignoble alloy and association, applied strictly to the highest ends, and working only for the uplifting, beautifying, and blessedness of mankind. When once the competitive system has been caught up into the higher sphere where Christ reigns, when it has been hallowed by his truth and temper, the corruptible will put on incorruption, and the glory and joy of humanity be secured forever." — *William L. Watkinson*.

2. **How that in much proof of affliction**. The Macedonian churches had suffered persecution, some of which Paul had shared with them. Those sorrows and trials might easily have shut them up to their own troubles, but on the contrary they opened their hearts to the griefs of other Christians far away, and so through their use of affliction made proof of their religion. **The abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality**. Moffatt's translation is: "Their overflowing joy and their deep poverty together have poured out a flood of rich generosity." Their poverty, literally, went down "to the depths," yet out of it, so deep was their compassion for others, and so gloriously did their joy in Christ spring up, that those depths overflowed with gifts to Christians still poorer and more afflicted than they were. Truly a rich and meaningful sentence!

3. **For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord**. Paul makes two points concerning true gifts: they are spontaneous, unforced; and they are at least proportionate to ability — if possible, beyond what can be afforded. The Macedonians "were then a poor people; their country and the adjacent countries had suffered from three tremendous and desolating wars. The taxation was intolerable; the people of Macedonia and Achaia had prayed Tiberius to be released from the government of the Senate, and to be placed more immediately under the administration of the Emperor himself, and this was done that they might in some degree mitigate the pressure of vexatious, harassing, and almost persecuting taxations. These were the people that astonished the apostle by their liberality to the needy people far away. But is it not always so?

4. Beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints :

5. And *this*, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.

6. Inasmuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.

7. But as ye abound in everything, *in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all earnestness, and *in* your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also.

Who are the people who adopt children? Persons who have nine or ten of their own. Who are kindest to the poor? The poor. Who was that pastor in Brussels long ago who, seeing a poor woman in great sorrow and suffering, took down his own bed to her, and himself took away the straw that he might lie upon it? He was a poor preacher, a poor Christian nobody." — *Joseph Parker*.

4. **Beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace.** That is, in regard to the opportunity for exercising the grace of liberality afforded by Paul's collection for the Jerusalem poor. **And the fellowship in the ministering to the saints.** The opportunity to join with Paul's other churches in the good work. Every collection in the churches, and every campaign for gifts throughout a denomination or a nation, is a rich chance for the enjoyment of Christian fellowship. We are doing things together, we are joined in noble effort with a great company of good people, and the thought should inspire us as we give.

5. **And *this*, not as we had hoped.** Paul had hoped they would do something for the collection, but he had not dared to hope they would do so much as they did do, or do it in so hearty a way. Many times we fail to give people a chance to give just because we do not trust them enough, we have too poor an opinion of their goodness of heart and the depth of their Christian character. The generals in the great campaigns of money-raising are those with the largest faith in Christian people. **But first they gave their own selves to the Lord.** First in time, perhaps ; at any rate, first in importance. The surrender of money is worth little without the surrender of heart. The motive consecrates the gift and renders it fruitful. **And to us through the will of God.** Paul was God's agent in the matter, through the will of God; also through the divine will the hearts of the Macedonians were turned to Paul as God's messenger. Paul did not boast of his success in raising the money, for it was God's success, not his.

6. **Inasmuch that we exhorted Titus.** "Titus (see 2 Cor. 2 : 13 ; 12 : 18) had been sent by the apostle to superintend the 'collection for the saints' at Corinth (1 Cor. 16 : 1). He was most probably the bearer of the former Epistle, and was anxiously expected by the apostle (2 Cor. 7 : 6) to bring information regarding the effect it had had upon the Corinthian church. Though Titus is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, he possessed in a high degree the confidence of Paul (2 Cor. 8 : 16), as is shown by his taking the chief place in this important mission. Before this he, as a Gentile, had been the subject of some discussion between St. Paul and the Judaizing party at Jerusalem. The latter maintained that Titus ought to be circumcised, the former that he ought not ; but St. Paul carried his point (Gal. 2 : 1-3). His character seems to have been one of deep earnestness and zeal (2 Cor. 7 : 13, 15 ; 8 : 16, 17), calculated to win the confidence of the great apostle. He was afterwards placed in charge of the church in Crete, and in this capacity received from St. Paul a letter of instruction known as the Epistle to Titus." — *Cambridge Bible*. **That as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.** At some previous visit to Corinth, Titus had proposed to the Corinthian Christians the collection for the Jerusalem poor, and had aroused their liberality, which now he was to carry to a still higher pitch of consecration. "Also" may refer to the success of Titus in restoring the Corinthians to their loyalty on his recent visit.

7. **But as ye abound in everything, *in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all earnestness, and *in* your love to us.** The way to get a person to do more and better is to give generous praise for what he has already done. Paul recognized in the Corinthian church sincere faith in Christ, a goodly degree of knowledge of Christian doctrine, vigor and boldness in preaching and teaching, zeal in Christian service, and a personal affection for their great founder which must have been a joy and

8. I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love.

9. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich.

comfort to him. *See that ye abound in this grace also.* Those that are whole-hearted in the practice of one Christian grace find it easier to be whole-hearted in any other grace. Abounding becomes a habit, and a glorious habit it is. "It is unhealthy when we spend a large proportion of our income on amusement and have no reserves to meet the demands of noble necessity. Millions of professedly Christian people give more money to see one moving picture than they give to the cause of God's kingdom in a whole year. I do not attribute this lack of beneficence to meanness, or to a stinginess which locks up its resources; it is explained by want of thoughtfulness, and by lack of method, and conscience, and piloted devotion." — *J. H. Jewett.*

8. *I speak not by way of commandment.* Paul, as the founder of the church in Corinth, had a certain authority there, but he would not use that authority. Giving to order is not real giving. Forced contributions are not genuine gifts, they are taxes. *But as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love.* "Proving" here is "testing." Macedonia's zeal in giving will put to the test Achaia's sincerity in its professions of love for Christ and for his apostle. Thus all the good works of other Christians will serve to test the reality of our religion.

9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Paul has been talking about the graces which the Corinthians have already manifested and the grace of liberality which he would have them add to their other graces. Now he sets before them as the supreme example the grace of self-sacrifice shown in the life of their Saviour. It is the one example to be followed, an example compared with which that of the Macedonian Christians was as nothing. Paul never went far without getting back to Christ. *That, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor.* Christ, before coming to earth, was rich in authority and honor, rich in all the glory of heaven where he sat beside the Father on the throne of the universe. In becoming man he divested himself of all that splendor, and also laid aside his omnipotence and omniscience, and became a helpless human babe, growing up in a humble earthly home, subject — and this was the climax of his poverty — to all the temptations of humanity. And this he did for the sole purpose of getting close to men, that he might lift them up into the Father's love. *That ye through his poverty might become rich.* In this magnificent sentence the entire gospel is expressed. As a drop of attar of roses contains the essential fragrance of a thousand flowers, so into those glowing words has been packed the complete doctrine of the atonement, the vital story of the New Testament. "He took on himself our manners and our poverty that he might bestow on us his own riches. For his passion is our relief from suffering, and his death is our immortality, and his tears are our joy, and his burial is our resurrection, and his baptism is our sanctification, and his stripes are our healing, and his chastisement is our peace, and his ignominy is our glory." — *Athanasius.* "The lower he descended to save us, the higher shall he arise in our esteem forever." — *Rev. Samuel Nichols, D.D.* "Christ causes his people to become rich with his own ancestral wealth, making them in a true sense 'partakers of the divine nature.' He was not content to be rich while we were poor. He was content to be poor that we might be rich." — *James Hastings.*

II. *THE RULES OF RIGHT GIVING,* 2 Cor. 8: 10-9: 5. *GIVE ACCORDING TO ABILITY* (2 Cor. 8: 10-15). Paul was a Jew, and some captious critics might have said that as a Jew he was chiefly concerned with the relief of his Jewish brethren, the poor Christians of Jerusalem, and did not care how heavily he burdened the Gentile Christians in collecting relief money from them. Therefore the apostle tactfully tells the Corinthians that what he wants from them is more the will to give than the gift itself. Let them have the spirit of liberality, and then give out of what they can readily spare. "For if the readiness is there, *it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not.*" This may be called the first rule of right giving. It is a double rule, the rule of heartiness and the rule of proportion. Provided one is eager to give, a poor man has no right to be ashamed of or dissatisfied with his necessarily small gift, any more than a rich man should be proud and boast of his

2 COR. 9: 6. But this *I say*, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7. *Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

large gift. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Paul uses a fine illustration, the experience of the Israelites in gathering the manna (Ex. 16: 18). No matter how much or how little each man succeeded in gathering, his supply was miraculously diminished or increased until it exactly met the needs of his family. So with a man's gifts: on the scales of heaven they precisely balance a man's willingness to give.

GIVE AS A PROOF OF LOVE (2 Cor. 8: 24). Paul used a powerful argument for giving when he urged the Corinthians to contribute liberally to the fund as a proof of their love, not only for the apostle but for all men. He had been boasting of them in Ephesus and in the Macedonian churches; now let them make good his boasts. Nothing is more valuable to a man or an association of men, such as a church, than the reputation of liberality. Some seem afraid to gain that reputation for fear they will be overwhelmed with applications for aid; but far better that than not be known as a kindly and generous Christian, and not set before the world the priceless example of Christian liberality. To be sure, our Lord has warned us not to give ostentatiously, but if our gifts advertise, not ourselves but the love of Christ in our hearts, then by giving we are letting our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven (Matt. 5: 16).

GIVE AS BOUNTY, NOT EXTORTION (2 Cor. 9: 5). A third principle of right giving which Paul lays down (quite incidentally but very forcibly) is that it must be unforced. "Give," he said to the Corinthians, "as a matter of your bounty, and not of my extortion." "The apportionment plan" of raising money for Christian work, whereby the sum needed is apportioned among the churches according to their assumed ability to give, is a very convenient and a very effective plan, but it is open to this objection, that it is liable to put our Christian giving on the same basis as the paying of taxes, or even, in the eyes of the stingy, on the ground of highway robbery, "Stand and deliver!" Wherever the apportionment plan is used it should be accompanied by constant and sedulous cultivation of the spirit of liberality, so that the apportionment is regarded as a note of information rather than a tax-bill, as a glorious goal which we shall ever be striving to exceed.

III. CHEERFUL GIVING, 2 Cor. 9: 6-15. BOUNTIFUL SOWING, BOUNTIFUL REAPING. 6. But this *I say*. With this emphatic introduction Paul introduces his summary of what he has to say about giving. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. Paul passes to the metaphor of seed-sowing as a strong contrast to the aspect of giving which some would call extortion (verse 5). Rather, says the apostle, it is like a farmer's sowing of seed in a field. The farmer sows gladly, and of his own accord, because he looks forward to a harvest. He sows liberally, because he wants a generous harvest, and he knows that stingy sowing would mean a scanty harvest. In every sense this is a fruitful comparison. It puts giving on the right basis of a privilege and a joy. And he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Paul's thoughtful readers could not fail to remember that the harvest of seed-sowing is always, in God's providence, vastly more than the seed. Every seed brings forth thirty-fold, sixty-fold, a hundred-fold. So with the kind words and helpful deeds which the Christian sows in the field of the world. What a bountiful harvest he reaps for each one of them! Sunday-school teachers, all through their lives, receive the gratitude and affection of their old-time pupils. All Christian teachers, all ministers and missionaries and evangelists reap rich harvests constantly from their seed-sowing of years ago. Loving fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers and friends, will reap through all eternity the blessed returns of their ministries. Thousands of dollars could not purchase the endless satisfactions which will result from the giving of every dollar to Christ's work, on foreign mission fields and at home.

7. *Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart.* Giving is to be purposeful, thoughtful, planned, systematic, not spasmodic, haphazard, impulsive, and ignorant. A wise giver keeps a record of his gifts. He has a list of the good causes in which he is interested, he records the money that comes in each month, and on the opposite page he sets down his gifts during the month, and sees that the second bears a definite proportion to the first. Not grudgingly, or of necessity. "*Grudg-*

15. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

ingly is literally 'out of sorrow'; *of necessity* is 'out of compulsion.' — *Prof. Harry Lathrop Reed*. For God loveth a cheerful giver. "Cheerful" is the Greek word which has been taken over into English in the word *hilarious*. The giver whom God loves has a glorious time with his giving, enjoys it thoroughly. Paul is quoting freely from the Greek translation of Prov. 22 : 8, which adds to what is found in our English Bibles the sentence, "A cheerful man and a giver God blesses."

There is a poem which tells how a stingy man in a dimly lighted church intended to put a penny on the collection plate, but by mistake put in a gold guinea. His heart was wrung, but it was too late to take the guinea back.

"No matter," he said; 'in the Lord's account
That guinea of gold is set down to me.
They lend to him who give to the poor;
It will not so bad an investment be.'

"Na, na, mon,' the chuckling sexton cried out :
'The Lord is na cheated — he kens thee well;
He knows it was only by accident
That out o' thy fingers the guinea fell!

"He keeps an account, na doubt, for the puir;
But in that account he'll set down to thee
Na mair o' that golden guinea, my mon,
Than the one bare penny ye meant to gie!"

"There's a comfort, too, in the little tale —
A serious side as well as a joke :
A comfort for all the generous poor
In the comical words the sexton spoke.

"A comfort to think that the good Lord knows
How generous we really desire to be,
And will give us credit, in his account,
For all the pennies we long 'to gie.'"

ENRICHED UNTO LIBERALITY. Paul goes on to promise the Corinthians that if they will gain a liberal spirit, God will see to it that they prosper so that they will have plenty to give, they will be "enriched unto liberality." Their gifts, indeed, will heap up many kinds of wealth : a wealth of thanksgiving to God on the part of the Jerusalem church, a wealth of affection on their part toward the Corinthian givers, a wealth of prayers on behalf of the church in Corinth, and a wealth of glory to God. Nothing, in short, so enriches the Christian, the church, and the world as this grace of giving.

GOD'S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT. 15. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. This is the fourth of these praiseful ejaculations which Paul introduces in this Epistle, the others being 1 : 3 ; 2 : 14 ; 8 : 16. The apostle lived a life of thanksgiving, which overflowed at all times. His thoughts turn constantly from any theme to Christ. He has been speaking of our gifts to God, and so turns naturally to God's great gift to men, his only-begotten Son. It is an unspeakable gift, a gift whose splendor passes the power of human speech to describe, like the "unspeakable words" which Paul heard in Paradise, as he tells us soon in this letter (2 Cor. 12 : 4).

"Many do not understand the unspeakable gift, but we are not content to love our friends, we want to give some outward and visible sign of that love — we want to send that love in something that can be seen and touched. So God wanted to send his love to you and me to see and touch and hear." — *Rev. Leighton Parks, D.D.*

"When Paul attempts to describe Christ's life and death for us, he finds himself dealing with things beyond expression — 'the culture of the unspeakable,' some one has called it. The unspeakable is nevertheless sure ground, for only when we realize the region of the unspeakable do we discover life at its fullest." — *Rev. William Thomas Hanzsche*.

LESSON IV (18). — October 28.

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM. — Acts 20 : 1—21 : 17;
2 Corinthians 11 : 28.

PRINT Acts 20 : 17-21, 28-38; 2 Cor. 11 : 28.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.* — ACTS 20 : 35.

Devotional Reading : John 10 : 7-17.

Primary Topic : PAUL TELLS HIS FRIENDS GOODBYE.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 1—21 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 28. Print Acts 20 : 17-23, 36-38.

Memory Verse : Jehovah bless thee and keep thee. Num. 6 : 24.

Junior Topic : PAUL TELLS HIS FRIENDS GOODBYE.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 1-21 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 28. Print Acts 20 : 17-23, 36-38.

Memory Verse : Numbers 6 : 24.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : WHAT OUR PASTOR DOES FOR US.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL, SHEPHERD OF THE CHURCHES.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes should not miss the striking story of Eutychus, with its practical applications. Neither should they fail to receive the accounts of the various attempts made to dissuade Paul from going to Jerusalem, with its teaching of bravery in the path of duty. Their main lesson, however, is Paul's loving farewell to the elders of Ephesus, with its exhortation to be faithful to the work God has given them to do—an exhortation needed by every boy and girl.

The Older Classes will find in this lesson a picture of the ideal relations between a pastor and his church. Study those relations fully and apply the lesson frankly to your own church. Are the church members all that they should be to their pastor? Are the church officers all that they should be to the members? Do the members support the church officers as they should?

Question Suggested for Discussion : Would the church be strengthened or weakened if all pastors and other Christian workers, including singers and organist and sexton, served without pay, earning their living as Paul did?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 57.

Place. — From Philippi to Troas, and thence to Miletus; then southward to Jerusalem, with stops at Tyre and Cæsarea.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Lessons from Eutychus.
Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders compared with his other addresses.
Paul as a preacher.
Paul as a pastor.
Paul as a missionary.
Paul's relation to his churches.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul the Faithful Christian Worker.

I. PAUL THE FAITHFUL PREACHER, Acts 20 : 1-21.

Paul's journeyings.
Drowsy Eutychus.
The elders of Ephesus.
Faithful teaching.

II. PAUL THE FAITHFUL PASTOR, Acts 20 : 22-38.

Free from the blood of all men.
Take heed to the flock.
A saying of Christ's.
Pastor and people.

III. PAUL THE FAITHFUL MISSIONARY, Acts 21 : 1-17 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 28.

The warning at Tyre.
The warning at Cæsarea.
Reaching Jerusalem.
Anxiety for the churches.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Ligon's *Paul the Apostle*. Clark's *In the Footsteps of St. Paul*. Rackham's *Acts in The Westminster Commentaries*. Ramsay's *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*. Furneaux's *Acts*. Gloag's *Acts*. Erdman's *The Acts*. Jefferson's *The Character of Paul*. Speer's *The Man Paul*. Hill's *The Apostolic Age*. Stalker's *Life of St. Paul*.

I. PAUL THE FAITHFUL PREACHER, Acts 20 : 1-21. PAUL'S JOURNEYINGS (vs. 1-6). Leaving Ephesus after the riot of the silversmiths, Paul travelled north to Troas, where he expected to meet Titus bringing news from the trouble in Corinth which gave the apostle so much anxiety. But Titus did not meet him there, and, unable to endure the suspense, Paul went on to Macedonia. There Titus found him and brought him good news that the Corinthians were repentant and were again zealous for his leadership. Overjoyed, Paul sent them Second Corinthians, himself remaining in Macedonia to complete the collection from those churches for the Jerusalem poor. Then he went to Corinth, where he spent three months gathering the relief fund and arranging for a little company to go to Jerusalem with the fund, that he himself might be freed from all possible suspicion.

"During the three months spent in Corinth, the winter of 57 and 58, the apostle wrote two of his most important Epistles, Romans and Galatians. And the fact that they were written about the same time and under similar circumstances accounts in a large measure for the similarity of their contents. The doctrine of justification by faith rather than by the law of Moses is the central truth in both of them." — *John W. Ligon*.

ACTS 20: 17. And from Mī-lē'-tūs he sent to Ēph'-ē-sūs, and called to him the elders of the church.

Paul had intended, leaving Corinth, to take ship at Cenchrea; but he learned of a plot against him, probably of robbers with designs on the large sum of money his party was carrying, and to outwit them made the journey by land through Macedonia. Most of Paul's party, including delegates from Beroea, Thessalonica, Derbe, and Ephesus, went ahead and waited for the apostle at Troas. Paul met them there with Luke the beloved physician, whom he had probably left at Philippi, Luke's city, on his first visit to Macedonia about seven years before. Here the "we" passages begin again, showing that the author of the Acts is once more journeying with the apostle. They sailed from Neapolis, the port of Philippi, in the spring, after the passover.

DROWSY EUTYCHUS. At Troas, the city made famous by Homer, Paul and his party remained for seven days. At least three of them, Paul and Luke and Timothy, had been there together before, and the place was of profound interest to the three as the scene of Paul's vision of the man from Macedonia which was the beginning of Christianity in Europe, and therefore of Christianity in America.

On the first day of the week, our Sunday, a communion service was held in Troas by the delegates and the Christians of the city. The New Testament contains no command to observe Sunday in place of Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, but in such passages as this we note the gradual transference of public worship from the day in which Christ lay in the grave to the day when he rose from the dead and when the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost. Paul before this had appointed Sunday as the day for the collection of offerings (1 Cor. 16: 2).

It was a hot night, the meeting place was up under the roof in the third story, and there were many lights in the room to augment the heat and take the life out of the air. Paul preached long, for he had much to say after all those years of thought and labor, and this was his only chance at that particular audience. Doubtless they were glad, as we should have been, to stay there as long as Paul would talk. But there was a young man named Eutychus who, with the best of intentions, simply could not keep his eyes open. He was sitting in the open window, and as he nodded in slumber down he fell to the stone-paved court below, and was taken up dead.

The joyous gathering would have closed in tragic sorrow, but Paul rushed down the outer stairway, fell on the corpse like the old prophets Elijah and Elisha, doubtless prayed with all the fervor of his great heart, and obtained the young man's life in answer to his prayers. Dr. Luke notes the incident with professional care and calmness. To us it is a warning to carry to church alert bodies and minds, while at the same time it is a standing rebuke of poor ventilation.

THE ELDERS OF EPHESUS (vs. 13-18). For some unknown reason, while Luke and some of Paul's other companions took ship for Assos in Mysia, opposite the famous island of Lesbos, Paul made the journey to Assos (twenty miles) by land, perhaps wishing to see some one on the way. Rejoining the company at Assos, Paul sailed to Mitylene, the capital of Lesbos, and thence along the coast, anchoring at night. The famous islands of Chios and Samos were on their way.

Paul did not take time to visit Ephesus, much as he longed to do so, for he was hastening to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, the day doubly sacred to a Christian Jew, and he knew that he would be delayed by many greetings and questions if he went to so large a Christian center as Ephesus, a place where he had spent more than three years. Therefore he passed by Ephesus and sailed to Miletus, an important city about twenty-five miles south of Ephesus, and from there sent a swift messenger to Ephesus.

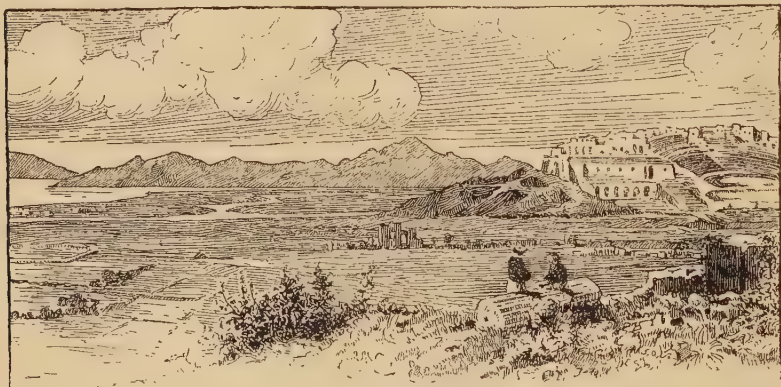
17. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. "Miletus was at one time a very important maritime and commercial city. Its ships sailed to every part of the Mediterranean, and it founded on the shores of the Black Sea more than seventy-five colonies. After its conquest by the Persians (B.C. 494), it gradually lost its importance; later it was captured by the Athenians and still later by Alexander the Great, and though it was enjoying some prosperity when St. Paul visited it, and continued to exist for some centuries after the Christian Era, it never regained its former importance, and to-day there are only a few ruins of the once great city to be seen. The most important, and almost the only ruin that one cares to see to-day is of the theatre, the largest in Asia Minor. The ancient harbor is now entirely filled up, and it is difficult to imagine the city that Paul saw."

18. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time,

19. Serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews;

20. How I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house,

— *Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D.* The elders (or “presbyters”) whom Paul summoned were the heads of the various Ephesian congregations. The office was adopted by the Christian churches from the Jewish, and is to be traced to the ancient tribal divisions in which the elders were the heads of the families or clans.



The Ruins at Miletus.

18. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time. “This address possesses unusual interest. It is the only specimen in the Acts of a sermon addressed to a church. We have had three sermons of St. Paul’s: to the Jews at Antioch and to the Gentiles — both educated at Athens and uneducated at Lystra. We shall have three speeches: to the Jews of Jerusalem, to Felix the Roman governor, to Agrippa and the world at large. Here, in the center, stands St. Paul’s charge to the church. The three sermons present the gospel aggressively; the three speeches present it apologetically; the charge combines both aspects, together with a third element of personal affection.” — *R. B. Rackham*. Paul wishes to add force to his farewell admonitions by reminding the elders of all that he had been to the church in Ephesus.

19. Serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind. Paul loved to call himself the bond-slave of Jesus Christ. In his work with his churches he did not exalt himself as an apostle, but like his Master took the form of a servant. All pastors and teachers should do the same. And with tears. A proud and cold man would not shed tears, but Paul’s heart was so warm and his interest in men so deep that he could not refrain from weeping over the recalcitrant and over the backsliders, and joining his tears with the mourners. Christian workers should follow Paul’s example here also. And with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews. Luke has not told us of these trials and plots, but only of the riot raised by the idolatrous Gentiles. Paul himself, in his brief list of the hardships of his missionary career (2 Cor. 11: 23-27), shows us how much of this sort Luke has omitted.

20. How I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable. Most of Paul’s audiences at Ephesus were made up of former idolaters, who would find it hard to break away at once and altogether from the iniquities and abominations of heathenism, especially as many of their relatives and old-time friends were idolaters still. Therefore Paul needed often to use exceedingly plain speech in bid-

21. Testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

28. Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.

ding his hearers cease sinning, and he had many disagreeable tasks in connection with individuals, going to them and warning them away from the bestialities of the worship of Diana. A true preacher and teacher cannot always deal in smooth and pleasant sayings. **And teaching you publicly, and from house to house.** The public teaching was first in the synagogue and then in the lecture room of Tyrannus, and the house teaching was in the home of Aquila and Priscilla and in other homes. No teacher or preacher can get permanent results without using both methods.

21. **Testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God.** John the Baptist, Jesus himself, St. Peter and St. Paul — all began their preaching by calling on men to repent of their sins. Jews and Greeks, men and women of all nations and of all stations, learned and ignorant, humble and powerful — every hearer needed first of all to turn from his sins and seek to live a pure and godly life. "Quit your meanness" was Sam Jones's most emphatic exhortation. It is the beginning of the Christian life. **And faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.** Repentance is only half of a true preacher's message, and the least important half; for it does no good to turn from sin unless we turn to the Saviour. Only faith in Christ can enable us to turn permanently from our sins. No one in his own strength can lift himself from the mire.

FAITHFUL TEACHING. "Paul deals with life, not with speculation. He does not seek to discuss problems, but to help men. He had no patience with subtle questions and speculations: all such discussion was in his esteem mere verbal trifling. He thought of, and spoke to, men and women." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.*

The faithful Sunday-school teacher, and the Christian teacher in all fields, will make it his chief aim to help people. Sometimes he can help them best by solving their intellectual problems, but usually he can be of the greatest service by simply leading them to Jesus Christ. Get them to read and study the Bible; and let it bring to them its own blessed message of comfort and cheer, of warning and power. The faithful teacher draws his pupils to the Great Teacher; then steps aside, and lets him do his work.

II. **PAUL THE FAITHFUL PASTOR,** Acts 20: 22-38. **FREE FROM THE BLOOD OF ALL MEN** (vs. 22-27). Paul, having taken this backward look, turns to his present errand. His spirit is turned toward Jerusalem by a compelling force, though he knows that there, as in every city he has visited, bonds and afflictions await him. But he faces the perilous future with glorious courage. He does not hold his life dear, if only he can do the work for which he has been commissioned, preaching the good news of God's grace in Jesus Christ. He has a premonition that they are looking at him for the last time, and at that solemn moment he calls them to bear witness to his fidelity. He has not hesitated to declare to them the whole counsel of God. He is pure from the blood of all men. The eternal death of not a single soul can be laid to his charge. These words show us in a vivid flash the heavy weight of responsibility under which Paul always worked. He must do his best, as every teacher and preacher must do his best, lest his omission of some plea or example or prayer may mean some one's endless sorrow and loss.

TAKE HEED TO THE FLOCK. 28. **Take heed unto yourselves.** Paul's words here are much like those in 1 Tim. 4: 16; they were probably exhortations that were often on his lips, like Christ's commands bidding his followers "Watch." Needless living is characteristic of to-day, and all of us, young and old, need especially to follow Paul's precept here. **And to all the flock.** Ever since David wrote the twenty-third Psalm God's people have been compared to sheep and God to a wise and loving shepherd. We are like sheep in our need of guidance, our proneness to stray away, and our weakness when attacked by the forces of evil. **In which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops.** The elders (presbyters) are here called bishops. "Bishop" is an English word which is a transference and corruption of the Greek word *episcopos*, which gives us "episcopal," and which means "an overseer." The Great Shepherd of our souls summons under-shepherds to aid him in his task. Pastors, Sunday-school teachers, church officers, parents, all that have to do with instructing and guiding

29. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock ;

30. And from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31. Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears.

32. And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build *you* up, and to give *you* the inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

33. I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34. Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

human souls, are God's under-shepherds. To feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. "Pastor" is from a Latin word which means "to pasture," "to feed." All pastors and teachers have as their main duty to feed those placed in their charge ; not to amuse them, not to flatter them, not to terrify them, but to give them what will build up and strengthen their souls as food builds up and strengthens their bodies. For those souls are very precious, their price being the infinite purchase of Christ's blood.

29. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. By his departing Paul meant his death, and by the wolves he meant the enemies from outside the church, especially the Jews who would do all they could to turn the Christians away from their Saviour and draw them back to Judaism. Much of Paul's warfare had been with such Jews.

30. And from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. "How sadly this anticipation was realized may be seen from the warnings in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 1 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 15 ; 2 : 17, 18) against Phygelus and Hermogenes, who had turned away all Asia from Paul ; and against Hymenæus and Philetus and Alexander, who were infected with the errors of the Gnostics. His long residence in Ephesus may well have enabled Paul to detect the germs of these evils. Thirty years later, John, writing from Ephesus, speaks (1 John 2 : 19) of 'many anti-Christ's' who 'went out from us, but were not of us.'" — *Dean William M. Furneaux.*

31. Wherefore watch ye. Watch against the possibility of false teaching, and the best way to watch is to fill men's minds full of sound teaching. Remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. Again we are made to feel Paul's warm heart, his tenderness and love. Paul was not afraid to weep, and that openly ; see 2 Cor. 2 : 4 ; Phil. 3 : 18.

32. And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace. "That is, to the truths of his gospel which they had heard from Paul. This word is personified, a living power able to build them up and to secure for them the promised inheritance." — *Prof. George H. Gilbert.* Which is able to build *you* up. Paul often spoke and wrote about the gospel as building up, "edifying," those that would receive it. When these Ephesian elders, many months later, received Paul's letter to their church written from his Roman prison, and read in it Eph. 2 : 20-22, they would remember these words of his farewell address. And to give *you* the inheritance among all them that are sanctified. Mrs. Helen B. Montgomery translates it : "He is able to build you up, and to give you your inheritance among all those who are consecrated."

33. I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. "Raiment is here mentioned along with gold and silver, because among the Orientals it was a chief part of their wealth. The Ephesians, who are informed, were celebrated for their luxurious apparel (Athenæus, XII., p. 525)." — *Paton J. Gloag.*

34. Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. "These hands" was accompanied by a gesture, Paul reaching out his hands to the elders. He was an animated speaker. Luke tells us that Paul labored at his tent-making in Corinth (Acts 18 : 3), but says nothing about Paul's working in Ephesus. Paul himself, however, writing from Ephesus to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4 : 11, 12), mentions this occupation, and so the Acts and the Epistles corroborate each other.

35. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all.

37. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him,

38. Sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they brought him on his way unto the ship.

35. **In all things I gave you an example.** A wonderful man, who can confidently point to his own life as an example to others in all particulars, and, moreover, not seem to be boasting in doing so, or be held by any to be unduly vaunting himself. Should not all Christians live so carefully that their lives could be taken as models by the young? "Those followers of Christ who can reveal the virtues which Paul exhibited and encouraged will surely share some of the success which was granted the apostle at Ephesus, and will receive something of the affection which his fellow workers showed to him." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman*. **That so laboring ye ought to help the weak.** Primarily, those too weak in body to support themselves; but the elders would be expected also to help those morally weak, and strengthen them. **And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said.** The following words are not to be found in the Gospels, but came down to Paul from some one who had heard them, perhaps from Mark; or Luke may have gleaned them, but omitted them from his Gospel. This is a priceless addition to the words of Christ. **It is more blessed to give than to receive.** More blessed to give money than to receive it; more blessed to give spiritual aid than even to receive it. God is the most blessed of all beings, because he gives everything and receives nothing. Heathen writers say just the opposite of this, as Athenæus (VIII. 5) wrote: "The giver is foolish, but the receiver is fortunate."

36. **And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all.** Later than Paul's day, the early Christians had the custom of praying standing on the Lord's day and during the seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost, the days when the church was awaiting the coming of the Spirit. In Paul's day standing in prayer was customary, but kneeling was for occasions of deep solemnity, such as this.

37. **And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him.** The verb translated "kissed" is a compound verb signifying "kissed him over and over." Orientals are far more demonstrative than are we cold-blooded Occidentals.

38. **Sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more.** "Behold" signifies earnest, prolonged, and reverent gazing, striving to fix the beloved features in memory. It is not the same as the word translated "see" in verse 25. **And they brought him on his way unto the ship.** "They would not lose one look or one word before they were forced to do so. We can see from these words that the harbor was at some distance from the town of Miletus." — *Cambridge Bible*. To-day the ruins of Miletus are still farther inland.

PASTOR AND PEOPLE. In Dr. Charles E. Jefferson's beautiful book on *The Character of Paul* he has chapters on his limitations, sincerity, sanity, weakness, strength, pride, humility, vehemence, patience, courage, courtesy, indignation, tenderness, breadth and narrowness, sympathy, thankfulness, joyfulness, trustfulness, hopefulness, love, religiousness, loveliness, and greatness. A marvellous array of qualities! Who could match them, save the Son of Man himself?

In his pastoral relations Paul's tenderness is a leading characteristic brought out in our lesson. "Paul loved his converts with a tender affection. He called them 'My beloved,' 'My dearly beloved,' which in our language means 'My dears.' To hurt any of his converts gave him deep pain. . . . The tears of Paul are a medium of revelation. They may not teach doctrine, but they reveal personality. They may not assist in working out a dogma, but they carry us deep into the heart of an apostle, into the heart of the Eternal." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

III. PAUL THE FAITHFUL MISSIONARY, Acts 21:1-17; 2 Cor. 11:28. **THE WARNING AT TYRE (VS. 1-6).** "Over all this journey there lies the shadow of the cross, even as over the last journey of Jesus to Jerusalem; and the hazard of the

2 COR. II : 28. Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches.

visit is increasingly emphasized as Paul goes forward." — *Prof. William Bancroft Hill*. As Paul's ship made a stop at the ancient city of Tyre, whose King Hiram helped Solomon build the temple, the apostle tarried seven days with the disciples, and there the Christians received from the Spirit warnings of the perils he would encounter in Jerusalem and begged him not to go. But Paul himself was led by the Holy Spirit, and went boldly on his way, with his eyes wide open.

THE WARNING AT CÆSAREA (VS. 7-14). Preceding southward, Paul reached Cæsarea, probably travelling by land from Ptolemais (Acre). Cæsarea was the Roman capital of Palestine, an important city where were many Christians with



From an old print. Artist unknown.

The Prophecy of Agabus.

whom Paul and his companions tarried several days. Among the Christians was Philip, one of the seven deacons, who had four daughters, all of whom were Christian evangelists. While Paul was there the prophet Agabus came from Jerusalem, the same, doubtless, who at Antioch years ago had foretold the great famine (Acts II : 28). By a symbolic act which reminds us of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, Agabus warned Paul against proceeding further : he bound himself, hands and feet, with Paul's girdle, and said that even so should the owner of the girdle be bound in Jerusalem. Then

Paul's comrades and the Christians of Cæsarea combined their entreaties that Paul should not run into such risks, but the stout-hearted, heroic missionary would not be persuaded. "He felt the solemnity of these warnings ; his was a brave heart, but it was too humble and reverent not to be overawed with the thought of death and judgment. But when his companions entreated him to turn back and avoid the threatened danger, he gently pushed aside their loving arms, and said : ' What mean ye to weep and to break my heart ? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' " — *James Stalker*.

REACHING JERUSALEM (VS. 15-17). Philip had established a Christian church in Cæsarea, and its members were alarmed for Paul's safety, so that some of them accompanied the apostle and his companions to Jerusalem. Among these was an early disciple named Mnason, who lived in Jerusalem, and with him it was arranged that Paul should lodge. On their arrival at Jerusalem, they were cordially greeted by the Christians who learned that Paul was in Mnason's house, the public reception on the part of the church being reserved for the following day.

ANXIETY FOR THE CHURCHES (2 Cor. II : 28). The Lesson Committee adds to this lesson a single verse from Second Corinthians, as illustrating Paul's loving care for the churches he had founded, — a care which weighed upon him far more than all the dangers to which he was subjected. Besides those things that are without. This may mean " in addition to such trials exterior to our church life which I have just named," which is the most natural meaning ; or it may mean " in addition to

the perils *without enumeration*, those not named in the preceding verse." **There is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches.** Not all the churches that had been established, including those founded by Barnabas, Peter, John, and the other apostles, but the churches which Paul had founded and for which he would feel responsible. Every Christian teacher and leader is greatly troubled by the weakness, folly, inconsistency, sluggishness, cowardice, and unfaithfulness of his followers. What could not Paul have done with even a single church made up entirely of Pauls!

"Paul had a wonderful way of handling his churches. Now he was gently paternal (1 Thess. 2: 7, 8, 11), now brotherly (1 Thess. 2: 17, 18), now sympathetic and tender (1 Thess. 4: 13-18), now plain and practical (Titus 3: 14), now half-feignedly haughty (Gal. 4: 11), now he touched a cord of plaintive recollection (Gal. 4: 13, 14), and now of irony (1 Cor. 4: 8), of stinging sarcasm (1 Cor. 4: 10; 2 Cor. 11: 19, 20), of pity (Gal. 3: 1), of scornful surprise (Gal. 1: 6), and now of playfulness (2 Cor. 12: 16). Now he thunders (2 Cor. 13: 2, 3; 1 Cor. 4: 18, 19; Gal. 1: 8, 9), and now he pleads with a father's pathos and a father's love (1 Cor. 4: 15; Gal. 4: 19, 20; 2 Cor. 6: 11-13) and now with generous and confident praise (2 Thess. 2: 14). Now he plays one church off against another in worthy emulation (2 Cor. 8, 9)." — *Robert E. Speer*. Every one who deals with others — and who does not, in some capacity and to some degree? — may well study the spirit and methods of Paul.

LESSON V (19). — November 4.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY. — Romans 13: 1-14.

PRINT vs. 1-10, 13, 14.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.* — ROM. 13: 10.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 15.

Primary Topic: OBEDIENCE TO LAW.

Lesson Material: Rom. 13: 1-14. Print vs. 1-7.

Memory Verse: Children, obey your parents. Eph. 6: 1.

Junior Topic: OBEDIENCE TO LAW.

Lesson Material: Rom. 13: 1-14. Print vs. 1-7.

Memory Verse: Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law. Rom. 13: 10.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: REASONS FOR PROHIBITION.

Topic for Young People and Adults: STANDING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes have in this lesson the very necessary teaching of obedience — obedience to their parents, their teachers, the laws of their town. Reckless disobedience to law is becoming very common to-day even among boys and girls, and few lessons of the year are required more than this. Show the pupils what are the consequences of a disobedient boyhood or girlhood. Consider the excuses for such disobedience that are often offered, and show how foolish they are.

The Older Classes have up again for discussion the pressing question of prohibition enforcement. If any officer charged with enforcing the prohibition law is available, be sure to obtain his presence with the class, and bring out his testimony. Review any recent book or

article on the subject. Consider what needs to be done to enforce prohibition in your community, and set in motion some machinery to that end.

Question Suggested for Discussion: What can we do to win over the enemies of prohibition?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Epistle to the Romans was written near the close of Paul's stay in Corinth, A.D. 57.

Place. — It was written in the great commercial city of Corinth.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Romans by Denney (*Expositor's Greek Testament*), Barmby (*Pulpit Commentary*), Arnold and Ford (*American Commentary*), Sanday and Headlam (*International Critical Commentary*), Bosworth (*Bible for Home and School*), Brown (*Hand-books for Bible Classes*), Garvie (*New-Century*

Bible), Moule (*Cambridge Bible*), Moule (*Expositor's Bible*), Parker (*People's Bible*), etc. Godet's *Studies on the Epistles of St. Paul*. Boise's *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*. Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. As we write, the most recent and valuable books on the prohibition question are "Prohibition at Its Worst," by Prof. Irving Fisher of Yale; "The Case for Prohibition," by Wilson and Pickett; and "Prohibition, Going or Coming?" by Elton R. Shaw.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Supreme values of the Epistle to the Romans.

Paul's utterances against drunkenness.

Paul's attitude toward Roman authority.

The Bible on the side of law.

"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

The American people firm for prohibition.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Laws and Their Enforcement.

I. HONORING RULERS AND OBEYING

LAWS, vs. 1-7.

The powers ordained of God.

Rulers not a terror to the good.

Why obey the prohibition laws?

II. LOVE FULFILLING THE LAW, vs. 8-10.

Loving one's neighbor as one's self.

Love works no ill.

Benefits of the prohibition laws.

III. CASTING OFF THE WORKS OF

DARKNESS, vs. 11-14.

Put on the armor of light.

Make not provision for the flesh.

How enforce the prohibition laws?

1. Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.

2. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.

I. HONORING RULERS AND OBEYING LAWS, vs. 1-7. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. Paul, when he wrote the letter to the Christians in Rome, expected to go to that great city soon, and sent this missive in advance to herald his arrival. He wrote it during his long first stay at Corinth, and his amanuensis was Tertius. The epistle sets forth more fully than any other writing Paul's entire system of theology, the grand resultant of his experience and his thinking. Luther called it "the most complete epitome of the gospel." Melancthon called it "a compendium of Christian doctrine." Findlay says of it, "For the purposes of systematic theology, it is the most important book in the Bible." Chrysostom had it read to him twice a week. Calvin said that "it opens the door to all the treasures of the Scriptures." Godet declared it to be "the cathedral of the Christian faith." Farrar considered it to be "the greatest of Paul's Epistles and one of the greatest and deepest and most memorably influential of all compositions ever written by human pen." As distinguished from the theological portion, chapters 12-15 constitute a practical treatise on the Christian life, and it is from this section that our lesson is taken. — *Condensed from Prof. D. A. Hayes.*

1. **Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers.** Not the powers that are higher than other powers, but the powers that are higher than the subject. Whoever rule, whoever exercise authority, are to be respected because of their office, though in themselves they may not be worthy of honor. It is the authority they hold which we honor, for they are, for the time, an embodiment of law and order; and, however unworthy they may be, and however faulty may be their government, they are infinitely better than anarchy. **For there is no power but of God.** Since God is the source of all human authority, it is to be honored as coming from him. But also, since he is infinitely above all earthly rulers, his authority is far superior to theirs, and they are not to be obeyed if their commands conflict with his. As the apostles said when bidden by the rulers to desist from preaching, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5: 29). **And the powers that be are ordained of God.** How could Paul say that, remembering that he was under the tyrannical power of imperial Rome, having at its head the monster, Nero, perhaps the most cruel ruler the world has ever known? A Nero ordained of God? No, Paul might answer, but the imperial power which he exercises was ordained of God, and it is best to submit to it even when held by a Nero. Rebellion against it would have been hopeless, and would have meant the extinction of Christianity, with unutterable sufferings for the Christians, besides letting loose all the worst passions of the mob.

2. **Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God.** In reading this passage we must remember Christ's meek submission to Pilate the Roman governor, though he could summon in his defence the irresistible armies of heaven. It is instructive also to recall how quickly Paul changed his tone from one of indignant rebuke to one of respectful apology when informed that he had been addressing the

3. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same:

4. For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.

5. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

6. For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.

high priest (Acts 23: 1-5). And they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. The condemnation of God, since they are resisting God's ordinance.

3. **For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil.** The theory and object of civil government is to protect the good against the evil, to put down unrighteousness and promote righteousness. Even when a Nero persecuted the Christians, he did it nominally in order to preserve order. We must remember how often in Paul's own career the authority and power of Rome saved him from death at the hands of Jewish mobs. On the whole, in the numberless details of countless lives, the Roman rulers worked for safety and justice. And this is not to palliate in the slightest degree the horrible barbarities of which they were guilty, and the many abuses of their power. **And wouldest thou have no fear of the power?** The Christians of Paul's time were well acquainted with fear, and Paul himself, in his persecuting days, had done much to fill them with terror. But he had learned that the presence of Christ and a good conscience can conquer fear even in the most terrifying circumstances. **Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same.** Do evil, and you are sure of punishment; do good, and you are sure of commendation: that is Paul's optimistic philosophy; and, with some exceptions that "prove the rule," it is borne out by human experience.

4. **For he is a minister of God to thee for good.** A "minister" is some one appointed to serve. Rulers are God's appointees, Paul declares. He would rejoice in the British term, "prime minister"; that is, head servant. **But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain.** "That is, it is not in vain that he is invested with authority to punish. As the common method of inflicting capital punishment was by decapitation with a sword, that instrument is mentioned as a symbol of the right of punishment, and, as many infer from this passage, of the right of capital punishment." — *Charles Hodge*. It is a sad commentary on this verse that Paul himself, according to tradition, was put to death by being beheaded with the sword of a Roman executioner. **For he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.** God's representative, in order fully to represent his Lord, must exhibit his stern side as well as his gentle side; he is appointed to praise and reward good deeds, but also to avenge those who have been wronged and act as the agent of God's wrath against the wrongdoer.

5. **Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.** "Not only as a prudent policy, but also as a religious duty." — *American Commentary*. But "the submission required by Paul does not at all exclude protestation in word and even resistance in deed, provided that to this latter there be joined the calm acceptance of the punishment inflicted." — *Godet*. There is a fine old motto, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God," obedience to the higher law.

6. **For for this cause ye pay tribute also.** The cause is one's conscience, one's knowledge that rulers are acting as God's agents in levying taxes as well as in punishing crimes. Grumbling tax-payers and dishonest tax-evaders should note this verse. **For they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.** The Greek word translated "ministers of service" is one of the most honorable in the Greek language. It is the designation of those who performed distinguished public service, not for wages, but as a patriotic duty and at considerable personal cost. Rich people among the Greeks did this for the people; rulers, Paul says, do the like for God, and not on one occasion only, but all the time.

7. **Render to all their dues.** "To all" rulers, in this connection, though of course the Christian is to give to all men everywhere what is their due. **Tribute to whom**

7. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

8. Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.

9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. "Tribute" is what is paid by a subject nation, while "custom" represents the dues which would in any case be paid for the support of the civil government. "Fear" is the respectful awe which is felt for one who has power in his hands; "honor" is the reverence paid to a ruler." — *International Critical Commentary*.

WHY OBEY THE PROHIBITION LAWS? Because they are the laws. Even if one does not regard them as wise, they should be obeyed while they remain on the statute book. To propose and advocate a referendum which if adopted would contradict their manifest intent and render them nugatory is to seek to nullify the Constitution. The patrons of bootleggers are as much law-breakers as the bootleggers themselves. The newspapers and comic weeklies that ridicule and misrepresent the law and encourage its violation are serving the interests of anarchy. The law should be obeyed strictly even by those who oppose it, because, if they are right, the more strictly it is obeyed the more readily can the people be persuaded to repeal it. As a lesson to youth, as a matter of pure citizenship, and to maintain public decency, all patriots will stand firm for obedience to the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act.

This does not preclude any legal attempt to convert American sentiment back to the cause of drunkenness, and to restore the saloon. Let the wets do their worst, in the open. They have to fight a vast and constantly increasing majority of the American people, backed up by the Supreme Court, the State legislatures, and a stanch majority in Congress. They can never repeal prohibition by fair means, as they know well. Let them continue to use foul means at their peril.

II. LOVE FULFILLING THE LAW, vs. 8-10. 8. Owe no man anything, save to love one another. We are to pay all our debts, except the great and universal debt of love; and this we are to try to pay all the time, though we never can pay it off. "See how wide is the application of this great principle of owing every man love. It means that the strong owe their strength to the weak. If any man have the gift of speech, he owes it to the dumb. If any man have wealth, he holds it as a trustee for the needy and honorable poor. If any man has influence, he says to those who are honestly seeking to live in the world an honorable life, 'What influence I have belongs to you.'" — *Joseph Parker*. For he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. "Has done all that the law requires. From what follows it is clear that Paul is thinking of the Mosaic law. The relation of chapters 12 and 13 to the Gospels makes it very credible that Paul had here in his mind the words of our Lord in Matt. 22: 34-40." — *Prof. James Denney*.

9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment. "For this" is literally, "For the —," making a noun of each of the following clauses; or the word "commandment" may be understood. The quotations are from the second table of the law, as that division of the Decalogue relates to our duties to our neighbors. It is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The highest word for love is here used, *agapao*, and not the lower, more sensuous word, *phileo*. "To love and appreciate one's self is nowhere represented as wrong, only it should not exceed the love of one's neighbor. Self-love and selfishness are very different ideas." — *James R. Boise*.

10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law. This is an understatement, which is always the most effective statement; love does not content itself with doing no ill to one's neighbor, but is constantly seeking to do him good, to bless him. Love completes the law thereby, for the law says, "Thou shalt not," while love says, "Thou shalt."

13. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.

14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

BENEFITS OF THE PROHIBITION LAWS. Irving Fisher, professor of economics in Yale University, finds that workers of all kinds are under prohibition ten per cent more productive than before. That means an addition of \$3,300,000,000 to our national annual income. Add to that the \$2,700,000,000 saved that would have been spent for liquor, and the total annual saving under prohibition is the unimaginable sum of \$6,000,000,000 "without counting any savings in the cost of jails, almshouses, asylums, etc., or any economic savings from reducing the death rate."

Professor Fisher finds that the real wages of workmen have been increased under prohibition 28 per cent above the level they had maintained for more than a quarter of a century — the "real" wages, making allowance for the lessened purchasing value of money. Profits have risen enormously, and the country is amazingly prosperous. Personal savings, as shown by savings banks, life insurance, and building and loan associations, have increased very largely under prohibition. "If prohibition enforcement," says Professor Fisher, "cost us even \$1,000,000,000 a year, it would be well worth while purely as an economic investment."

It has been proved that the enormous number of saloons that have ceased to exist have been replaced by groceries, restaurants, shoe stores, clothing establishments, banks, and the like, employing far more workers than the saloons, and the value of land has nowhere fallen but has usually risen.

School teachers everywhere report that children come to school better fed and better clothed than before prohibition. Charity organizations report much less work to do in caring for the poor. Hospitals report a marked diminution in the diseases caused formerly by drinking. Jails have been closed up in all parts of the country.

"There are some people who labor under the delusion that they are going to have the prohibition law modified or abolished. Some one should wake them from their Rip Van Winkle sleep. I wish they could go with me for thirty days as I travel over this broad land and see the houses being erected everywhere, note the accounts being opened in savings banks, see the families out together in parks, recreation and community centers, children well fed, with shoes to wear, and warm clothing, going to school; see prosperity, happiness, and sunshine where formerly there were only squalor and misery. All this is a result of prohibition. We are not going back to the old condition of things with their misery, want, and poverty — never again. *Prohibition has come to stay.*" — *The late Warren S. Stone, Grand Chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.*

III. CASTING OFF THE WORKS OF DARKNESS, VS. 11-14. PUT ON THE ARMOR OF LIGHT. In the two omitted verses, 11 and 12, Paul tells the Roman Christians that he is emphasizing the fulfilment of the law by love because the great day of fulfilment is at hand, the dawning day of perfected love. The Sun of Righteousness has risen upon the earth. "Awake from your slumber!" cries the apostle. "Cast off the works of darkness! Put on the armor of light! Accoutered in this light of gospel truth as a valiant soldier of Christ, leap into the warfare of the new days!" It is a trumpet call to brave and true living, and sounds to-day over the world as clearly as two thousand years ago.

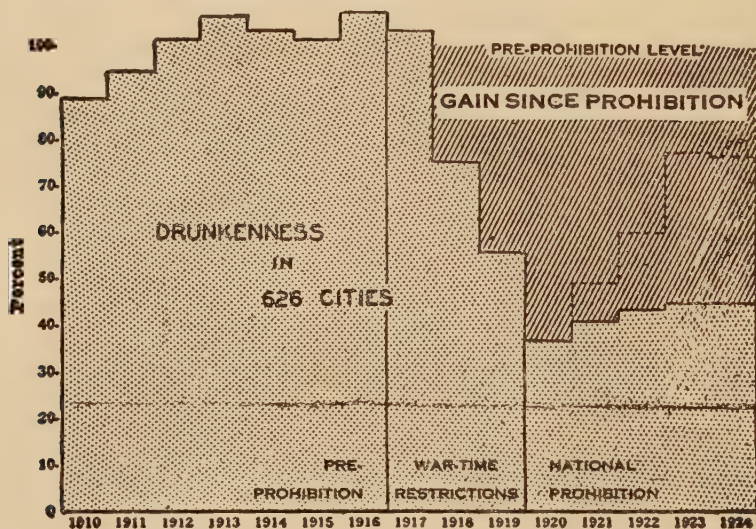
13. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day. This verse is said to have led to the conversion of St. Augustine from his wild life to the service of God in which he became so distinguished. Men walk decorously by day, however lawless they may be when hidden by the darkness. The Christian is to live, by night and by day, as bathed in light, and open to the eyes of all men as he is to the all-seeing eyes of God. **Not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.** These forbidden practices are all connected closely with drinking. The object of drinking alcohol is to get drunk; men have no use for liquor that has no "kick" in it, that will not in time kick them into the gutter. Licentiousness and drunkenness go hand in hand, and the house of ill fame is ever a close neighbor of the saloon. Quarreling and bloodshed, murders and all other crimes of violence, have their origin more frequently in drinking than in any other cause.

14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. The thought may be of a suit of armor, "the armor of light," for Christ is the defence of the Christian. Or, Paul may have

been thinking of garments, for Christ is the Christian's warmth and comfort. In either case, he is regarded as very close to the Christian, surrounding him all the time, being to the Christian the fulfilment of his every need. **And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.** "The clause, of course, means (under a sort of euphemism) 'positively deny the flesh'; but it specially suggests the sad thought of the elaborate pains with which so often sin is *planned and sought*." — H. C. G. Moule. Every saloon is a "provision for the flesh."

HOW ENFORCE THE PROHIBITION LAWS? "If we want to make the country distinctly dry we must begin now an educational campaign that shall be as thorough as that by which we won prohibition :

"First, for law obedience, until we create a conviction that will make people wish to obey the law and use their personal influence against its violation.



Courtesy of Professor Irving Fisher.

Showing the Statistics for More than One Quarter of the Population of the United States.

"Second, for law enforcement that shall take charge of the criminally disposed and make them obey the law.

"Third, for law respect, until the whole public shall see that prohibition has not been a detriment to the state, but that it has been a tremendous benefit to the individual and to society.

"To this end the pulpits, the Sunday schools, the day schools, the independent and respectable newspapers, should renew their lessons of temperance, abstinence, and prohibition; for if our country makes good it will extend its policy around the world, and the liquor traffic will take its place in history with piracy on the high seas, the African slave trade, chattel slavery, the lottery systems, the gambling hells, the red-light districts, the brewery-owned saloons, and the entire group of giant evils that civilization would tolerate no longer. If we fail, the cause will react upon itself and put every other moral and religious interest back." — *Wilson and Pickett*.

Law enforcement depends on the selection of brave and faithful enforcement officers, and such selection depends on the intelligence and fidelity of the voters. In these days it is especially necessary for every citizen to vote; and, before voting, to inform himself thoroughly regarding the candidates and the issues, particularly any referendums that may be set before the electorate. It is not the business of the private citizen to enforce the law, but to insist that this shall be done by the officers elected for that purpose. It is not even his business to gather information and lay it before the officers, backing it up with legal evidence. It is the business of the officers to do all this; and if they do not do it, they should be turned out of office.

All who believe in prohibition should support with liberal gifts the temperance organizations, such as the Anti-Saloon League and the W. C. T. U. They should circulate prohibition leaflets, pamphlets, and books, and display prohibition posters. Above all, they should talk up prohibition with courage and zeal, never joining in current sneers, but rebuking them with contempt and putting them down with facts and logic.

The prohibition laws can be enforced with as much completeness as the laws against murder. Are we doing our share to that great end?

LESSON VI (20). — November 11.

PEACE AND GOOD WILL AMONG MEN. — Romans 12: 1-21.

PRINT vs. 1, 2, 9-21.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* — ROM. 12: 21.

Devotional Reading : Phil. 2: 5-11.

Primary Topic : TREATING EACH OTHER RIGHT.

Lesson Material : Rom. 12: 1-21. Print vs. 9-18.

Memory Verse : Render to no man evil for evil. Rom. 12: 17 a.

Junior Topic : TREATING EACH OTHER RIGHT.

Lesson Material : Rom. 12: 1-21. Print vs. 9-18.

Memory Verse : Render to no man evil for evil. Rom. 12: 17 a.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW TO PROMOTE GOOD WILL.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE MESSAGE AND PROGRAMME OF WORLD PEACE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes need as much as their elders a lesson on peace, though of course it will be adapted to individuals and not deal with world peace. The teacher will show the wickedness of a quarrelsome spirit, and the real power of the spirit of love. Show how a Christian boy or girl will exemplify that spirit in the home, in school, on the playground, and in his neighborhood.

The Older Classes will discuss personal disputes, neighborhood and church quarrels, denominational rivalries, racial animosities, sectional jealousies, trade wars, class struggles, and especially national hatreds and contentions. This is a world peace lesson, for war has risen to a terror and destructiveness before unknown, and if another world war is allowed it might easily destroy human civilization. No topic is more timely and pressing than this. All Christian agencies should do their share toward furthering world peace.

Question Suggested for Discussion :
How can another world war be prevented?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Jordan's *War and Waste*. Chittenden's *War or Peace*. van Dyke's *Fighting for Peace*. Stilwell's *Universal Peace*. Fisher's *America's Interest in World Peace*. Gulick's *The Fight for Peace*. Cory's *Think*

Peace. Gibson's *War Abolition*. Boardman's *Nationalism and Internationalism*. "On Earth Peace," by McCulloch and Burton. *The Abolition of War*, by Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Epistle to the Romans was probably written in A.D. 57.

Place. — It was written in Corinth.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's teachings in regard to peace.
Paul's rules for avoiding quarrels.
Why the church should lead in the peace movement.
Agencies promoting world peace to-day.
Why Christians oppose war.
Peace in the writings of John.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : World Peace.

I. ONE BODY IN CHRIST, vs. 1-8.

The perfect will of God.
Many members, one body.

II. BLESS YOUR ENEMIES, vs. 9-17.

Love the brethren.
Render not evil for evil.

III. AT PEACE WITH ALL MEN, vs. 18-21.

Avenge not yourselves.
Overcome evil with good.
The war against war.

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service.*

2. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

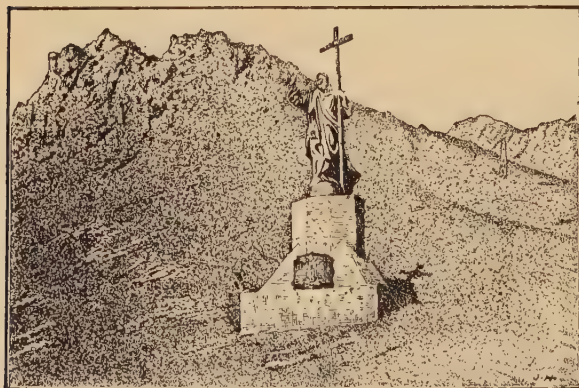
I. ONE BODY IN CHRIST, vs. 1-8. Last Sunday we considered briefly as a whole the great Epistle of Paul to the Romans, whose main purpose is doctrinal, to set forth God's love to men manifested in Christ, and the atonement which Christ wrought for the sins of the world. In view of all that God has done for us, we should yield our entire lives to him; and therefore the conclusion of the Epistle is practical, showing how we should serve God. Our lesson stands at the very beginning of this practical portion; last Sunday's temperance lesson was a little farther along.

1. **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God.** "Therefore" goes back to the whole of the preceding argument: "in view of God's mercy shown in Christ to a sinful world, I beseech you." At the close of the chapter before this Paul has much to say about the divine mercy. **To present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.** Now that Christ, the perfect Sacrifice, has been offered up for sin, we need no more sacrifices of animals on an altar; but there is a sacrifice that is required of us, our bodies, that is, our lives. As our bodies are kept pure, holy, acceptable to God, the activities of those bodies and the thoughts of our minds will also in consequence be pure, holy, and acceptable. A temperate life means body, mind, and soul well-pleasing to God. No quality is more pervasive than temperance, or more powerful in its blessed influence. **Which is your spiritual service.** "Your reasonable service" in the King James version. "This does not mean a worship which it is reasonable for you to offer, but a worship which befits your reason. It is a spiritual offering as contrasted with the offering of brute beasts." — *Principal Alfred E. Garvie.*

2. **And be not fashioned according to this world.** Literally, "this age," the transitory period of our mortal life, subject to sin and death. "Fashioned" in the Greek implies an outer shell or husk, a mask, a surface mold, as distinguished from the inner reality. "This world is but an empty show"; do not let it take possession of you and determine the shape of your life. **But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.** Whoever is "in Christ" is "a new creation," "a new man." His mind or soul has become metamorphosed, and that has transformed his entire being. Christian regeneration is not a surface change or "fashioning," but goes to the very heart of one's existence.

That ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Proving here means testing, discovering. The Christian has the mind of Christ, and so can discern the mind of God. Others may be perplexed to know God's will, but it is clear as daylight to him.

MANY MEMBERS, ONE BODY. The omitted verses, 3-8, constitute a powerful plea for peace among men. Quarrels arise most often, perhaps, from pride and self-conceit. Each is sure that his way is the best and should prevail, that he is



Peace Statue; "The Christ of the Andes."

On the base is engraved this inscription, "He is our peace who hath made both one."

most deserving and should have the best chance. Paul bids each of us not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but *so* to think as to think soberly — a

9. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another;

11. In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer;

translation which parallels Paul's play upon words. Humility, in men and nations, would be a guarantee of peace; but to-day we seem to set a higher value on aggressiveness, "push," "go-getting," and braggadocio. Much of nationalism and so-called patriotism is simply thinking of one's own country more highly than we ought to think, and would be shamed into silence by a knowledge of other lands.

The remainder of these verses compares the church and society to a human body. As it has various limbs and organs, each with its own excellency and duty, each necessary to all the others, so the church and society are made up of different persons, each with his peculiar ability, and each having something to contribute to the general welfare that no one else can contribute. If men would only grasp this idea of a universal partnership in doing the work of the world, labor disputes would be at an end, and class warfare would cease. So also would war between nations be no more, since each nation is helpful and necessary to every other nation, and any breach of the peace is a wound that sickens the whole earth.

II. BLESS YOUR ENEMIES, vs. 9-17. 9. Let love be without hypocrisy. Literally, "the love," that is, the love that Christians are to manifest, to one another and to the world. Hypocrisy vitiates it all, like a base admixture in a precious metal, or a few drops of red paint in a can of white. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. An ear that is finely attuned to harmonics will shrink from a false note. To an artist a bad arrangement of colors is like a blow in the face. So the love of goodness carries with it a detestation of all wickedness. Cultivate what is noble in life, and what is ignoble will fall away from you, as the circulation of sap in a live tree means the sloughing off of the dead leaves.

10. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another. "In (the matter of) love of the brethren" gives the sense better. The love implied is family affection. A church should be like one big family, each member helping the others, standing up for the others, encouraging the others. In honor preferring one another. "In (the matter of) honor, preferring one another." The Christian family, the church of God, is the best school of courtesy, for true politeness is essentially unselfishness. If we do not seek honor for ourselves, but instead try to advance others, we shall have the spirit of Christ, who "pleased not himself." In this rule of the Christian life we touch the very heart of peace. What war would ever be waged if each nation sought the preferment of other nations instead of its own?

11. In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. "In (the matter of) diligence, not slothful." The true follower of Christ will be industrious, doing more than his full share of the world's work; and he will show the same zeal in "his Father's business." "In (the matter of) the spirit, fervent." Industry is not enough; the spirit in which we work determines the value of our labor. The Christian enjoys his work, is zealous in it, "boiling" in it — which is what "fervent" means in the Greek. "Serving" here implies *bond* service, the service of a slave. All our industry and fervor are consecrated to our Master, Jesus Christ. Because we are his servants, proud to be his slaves, we are diligent and fervent. This twelfth chapter of Romans has been chosen, very appropriately, as "the Christian Endeavor Chapter" of the Bible.

12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer. This is to be understood, as before: "In regard to hope, rejoicing; in regard to tribulation, enduring; in regard to prayer, persevering." Christians can rejoice always, for a sure hope is set before them. They can endure patiently the trials which are certain to come to them, knowing that their Saviour, who bore so much heavier trials, will furnish all needed strength. They can "pray without ceasing," for prayer is talking with Christ, and Christ is ever by their side; how can they keep from the joy of converse with their Friend?

13. Communicating to the necessities of the saints. Persecution and exile caused

13. Communicating to the necessities of the saints ; given to hospitality.
14. Bless them that persecute you ; bless, and curse not.
15. Rejoice with them that rejoice ; weep with them that weep.
16. Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits.
17. Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

much poverty among the early Christians, and it was especially necessary to emphasize the duty of sharing one's possessions with the poor ; nor were the early Christians at all remiss in fulfilling this duty. The vast and unexampled gifts of Christian nations during recent years, bestowed on occasions of great calamities — fire, flood, famine, earthquake, plague, and war — has been one of the strongest bonds cementing the nations together and preventing war. **Given to hospitality.** The early Christians were often driven from their homes, and forced to take refuge in the hospitable homes of other Christians in foreign lands. In Oriental countries the grace of hospitality is more valued and cultivated than in the busy Occident, nor does our modern tendency toward tiny flats and crowded "suites" promote the practice of hospitality. Among the nations the increasing custom of the exchange of professors, students, and public lecturers is a form of hospitality ; so also are the habit of wide travel and the wide circulation of books and periodicals among the nations. All of this is most favorable to world peace.

14. **Bless them that persecute you ; bless, and curse not.** Christ himself had commanded this, as Luke had doubtless told Paul (Luke 6 : 28) ; and he had himself, in the midst of the most cruel agony of the cross, prayed for his crucifiers. The terrible persecution under Nero was soon to begin in Rome, and Paul probably knew of many instances of private persecution which the Roman Christians were enduring.

15. **Rejoice with them that rejoice ; weep with them that weep.** Thus Christ at the marriage feast at Cana rejoiced with the rejoicers, and at the grave of Lazarus wept with the mourners, even though he was about to bring back the dead from the grave. Paul's letters are full of joy in the happiness and goodness of his fellow Christians, and we have seen how often he speaks of weeping over their sorrows. Sympathy with others is one of the chief sources of world peace and private serenity, and this sympathy will show itself as freely and beautifully in rejoicing over their good fortune as in grieving over their misfortunes.

16. **Be of the same mind one toward another.** That is, growing together so closely in mutual love that the same thoughts and feelings will actuate the entire church, all the members being bound together by that adoration of the Saviour and desire to serve men which they have in common. **Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly.** This "same mind" which Paul would have Christians attain cannot be won by the proud and exclusive, those who are exalted by their family position, their rank, their money, their mental ability, their spiritual insight, or any other "high thing." It is consistent only with humility and real brotherhood, which counts all men, even slaves, as brothers in Christ. "Peace on earth" is to be attained only by this regard for the lowly races, the humbler nations, on the part of the peoples that are set on high by their own energy and ability or by providential opportunities and leadings. **Be not wise in your own conceits.** Paul repeats his injunction of Rom. 11 : 25. The literal meaning of the phrase is "judged wise in your own court." Here is another exhortation to humility, so necessary is the quality if men are to work happily and effectively together.

17. **Render to no man evil for evil.** Christ went farther when he bade his followers not to resist evil men, but if they should smite one cheek, turn the other for a blow (Matt. 5 : 39). Paul himself went farther in 1 Thess. 5 : 15. Retaliation for real or fancied injuries gives rise to many quarrels among men and to war among the nations. The principle here laid down does not forbid our resisting wickedness and aiding the weak when the strong oppress them ; but we are to do this in the spirit of love and not of hate. **Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.** The reputation of the church, the honor of Christ among men, are in the hands of Christians. We are so to live that men will see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. We are to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," as Paul said (Titus

18. If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.

19. Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.

20. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

2: 10). And in order to do this we must think about the impression our lives are making on the world. This does not mean that we are to be slaves to human opinion, for Christ said, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you"; but we are to seek the honor of all honorable men, letting it be known that whatever is praiseworthy in us is due to Christ.

III. AT PEACE WITH ALL MEN, vs. 18-21. 18. If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. Literally, "If it be possible, so far as your side is concerned." It is a very necessary limitation of the command. A Christian may be obliged to contend against others, if they assume the aggressive and attack the defenseless or assault the innocent or seek to undermine righteousness. Christians are not to start quarrels, initiate war, and are not to contend except as the Prince of Peace is their leader.

19. **Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God.** "The wrath" is all that is in the Greek. "Three explanations of this phrase are given. (1) Give space to your anger. Put an interval between your emotion and its expression. Give your temper time to cool. Delay of expression means decrease of emotion. (2) Give your opponent's anger room. Let him rage as he will. If you don't oppose him, his anger will spend itself. (3) Stand aside, and let God's wrath avenge your wrong. (For the use of the phrase compare Eph. 4: 27, 'Neither give place to the devil.') This last is the best interpretation as regards both the meaning of the Greek phrase and the context." — *Principal Alfred E. Garvie*. "Beloved" is beautifully and appropriately interjected, indicating that the Christian will refrain from revenge because he is surrounded by an atmosphere of love. **For it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.** Paul is quoting Deut. 32: 35, which the writer of Hebrews also quotes (10: 30), but to assure Christians that they will surely be punished by God if they sin in the full understanding of God's will which they possess.

20. **But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink.** Here again Paul is quoting the Old Testament, Prov. 25: 21, 22. The practical value of this precept in overcoming an enemy has often been proved in private life, but it has been held too hazardous to apply to another nation at war with us. But suppose that during the World War, knowing that Germany was in sore straits for food, the Allies had convoyed a fleet of grain vessels into a German harbor, would the war have been prolonged or shortened thereby? Enormous sums were spent by both sides for propaganda. Who can doubt that, regarded as propaganda if nothing higher, such an act would have paid for itself many times over? **For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.** "If an enemy be overwhelmed with kindness, his face will be set aflame with the blush of shame over his misconduct." — *Prof. Edward I. Bosworth*. Other explanations of the phrase, "coals of fire," are "of the melting of the evil doer's heart by such conduct, as of metal by fire; and of the result of a spirit of love as producing at length the 'incense' of prayer and praise (as from censer-coals) from the conquered heart. A simpler, yet more inclusive, explanation is Alford's: 'In thus doing, you will be taking the most effectual vengeance'; the idea of vengeance being, in the Christian's view, transformed, so as to become in fact the victory of love." — *H. C. G. Moule*.

21. **Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.** The moving thought is that if we imitate our enemy's quarrelsomeness and retaliate upon him in his own base spirit, we are ourselves defeated thereby, for he has forced his evil upon us; whereas if we meet his cruelty with kindness we are overwhelming him with our goodness, and thus conquering him. "Out of countless examples in Christian history we quote one from the native church in China. In 1878 a small and new Christian community was severely persecuted, and some of the converts, grown-up men, were cruelly ill-used by a petty official, without the least resistance on their part. Some

time after, this official was summoned before a superior officer, and sentenced to severe punishment. But one of his former victims, who meanwhile had not been his accuser, interposed and procured his pardon ; and their enemy was turned forthwith into a grateful and cordial friend." — *Cambridge Bible*.

THE WAR AGAINST WAR. "I confess without shame that I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. Even success, the most brilliant, is over dead and mangled bodies, the anguish and lamentations of distant families, appealing to me for missing sons, husbands, and fathers. It is only those who have not heard a shot, nor the shrieks and groans of the wounded, friend or foe, who cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation." — *General William T. Sherman* (1865).

"The day of peace is coming. Which shall it be, the Peace of Force or the Peace of Law? We may work for either. We cannot have both. Every man has some influence in forming public opinion, and, at the last, the world is ruled by what its people think. You have a vote in world affairs. Its weight depends on your intelligence and your integrity. How should your vote be cast?" — *David Starr Jordan*.

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals or forts." — *Henry W. Longfellow*.

"We use force to restrain the insane, and also violent criminals. Is it unchristian to use force in restraining a nation that has lost its mental balance or that has entered on a course of criminal international destruction and robbery? But we must not forget that the effort to settle questions of social or national relation on the basis of mere force is disastrous — nay, impossible in the long run. As civilization advances the resort to force diminishes and the appeal to reason and to character increases. This is of the very essence of civilization." — *Rev. Sidney L. Gulick, D.D.*

"Modern war — whatever may be said about wars of previous generations — in actual operation is not constructive but so enormously destructive as to menace the existence of our civilization. In the aggregate it neither protects the innocent nor redeems the guilty. Society would not tolerate a police system which killed a hundred innocent people for every person protected from a criminal. Is it any more reasonable to support a war system that has such a result?" — *Kirby Page*.

"Militarism itself, rightly estimated, is a breeder of sloth, for it suppresses rather than promotes those normal activities upon which the welfare of the race depends. When these activities are unrestrained and man's energies are all directed to promotion of the common welfare, there will be an inspiration of effort and purpose such as the world has not yet experienced ; and results will be realized which will make even the vast achievements of the present day pale in comparison." — *General Hiram M. Chittenden*.

"England's Iron Duke, 'foremost captain of his time,' never said a truer or sadder thing than in his despatch from the red field of Waterloo : 'Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.' In the divine conception of all mankind as one single body, one colossal moral organism, lies the secret of the reconciliation of the great schism in the one body of humanity. The cure of war lies not in the suspicion and enmity and rivalry that are entrenched in armaments ; the cure of war lies in the confidence and brotherhood and coöperation that are announced in disarmament." — *George Dana Boardman*.

"No peace can last which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand people about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property." — *Woodrow Wilson*.

"There are no boundaries to justice ; Love has no empire but the mind of man. Charity is not only giving bread and clothes to the needy and building hospitals for the sick, but all uplifting ideas are charity. Good government for weak nations is charity, and the best of all." — *Arthur Edward Silwell*.

"In regard to the right of the peoples of the world, small or great, to determine their own form of government and their own action, we are fully committed. This principle is fundamental to our existence as a nation." — *Rev. Henry van Dyke, D.D., D.C.L.*

"If one-hundred-per-cent national sovereignty is worth more than a Christian peace and justice, then keep the war game or institution. But if a real honest peace as taught by the Prince of Peace is desired, then at least a certain amount of national

sovereignty will have to be given up or at least postponed or mediated until the full truth can be made known when an overt act is committed." — *Harry P. Gibson.*

"Slav, Teuton, Kelt, I count them all
My friends and brother souls,
With all the peoples, great and small,
That wheel between the poles." — *Alfred Tennyson.*

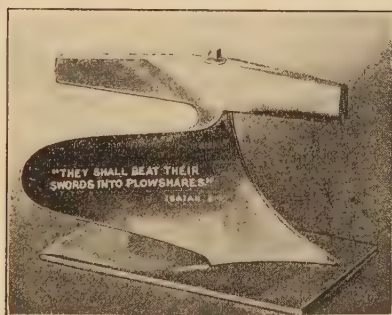
"In four years the League of Nations has snuffed out, or headed off, six wars, any one of which might otherwise have developed into another World War. These were: Sweden *versus* Finland, Jugoslavia *versus* Albania, Germany *versus* Poland, Poland *versus* Lithuania, — all over disputed territory, — Bulgaria *versus* Roumania over a question of refugees, and Italy *versus* Greece over certain murders and the occupation of Corfu. . . . The League has resuscitated Austria, and this resuscitation became the economic miracle of Europe. To-day it is doing the same thing for Hungary and Albania. . . . The League has many wonderful humanitarian accomplishments to its credit. It has stopped the spread of disease from one country to another, such as typhus from Poland; it has limited the opium trade and reduced the white slave traffic." — *Prof. Irving Fisher.*

"Join hands! Join hands! Ye nations of the stock!
And make henceforth a mighty Trust for Peace; —
A great enduring Peace that shall withstand
The shocks of time and circumstance; and every land
Shall rise and bless you — and shall never cease
To bless you — for that glorious gift of Peace." — *John Oxenham.*

"In the World War two wounded soldiers from opposite lines were thrown together, one from Austria and one from France. Bits of shell had opened their channels of blood, and life was ebbing. 'Comrade, I am sorry,' gasped the French soldier in broken German. 'Ah, I could die gladly if I could know that I had not caused your death,' poured out the Austrian soldier. Death was near, and the French soldier flung out his hand until it fell on the face of the Austrian, and in convulsive breath he moaned, 'Here's to Peace.' The French sergeant who was watching turned his face away, but I saw that it was working with grief. When he turned to minister to the dying men he whispered, 'Here's to Peace.'" — *Rev. Abe Cory, D.D.*

"Until there is desire among the nations that war shall cease, it is vain to hope for a warless world. The hopeful thing of our day is that probably never before has that desire been so deep and widespread as now. It is the opportunity of the Church of Christ through all her agencies, especially her great missionary organizations, to promote this desire among the people of every nation." — *McCulloch and Burton.*

"Peace will come when there is realization that only under a reign of law based on righteousness and supported by the religious conviction of the brotherhood of man can there be any hope of a complete and satisfying life. Parchment will fail, the sword will fail; it is only the spiritual nature of man that can be triumphant." — *President Calvin Coolidge.*



LESSON VII (21). — November 18.

PAUL'S EXPERIENCES IN JERUSALEM. — Acts 21:17-23:35.

PRINT Acts 21:37-22:1; 22:22-29.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.* — EPH. 6:10.

Devotional Reading : Eph. 6:10-20.

Primary Topic : HOW A BOY HELPED HIS UNCLE.

Lesson Material : Acts 21:17-23:35. Print vs. 16-22.

Memory Verse : Trust in Jehovah and do good. Ps. 37:3 a.

Junior Topic : HOW A BOY HELPED HIS UNCLE.

Lesson Material : Acts 21:17-23:35. Print vs. 16-22.

Memory Verse : Trust in Jehovah and do good. Ps. 37:3 a.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL PROVES HIS COURAGE.

Topic for Young People and Adults : RELIGIOUS PREJUDICE AND FANATICISM.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes lay especial stress on the bold and loving work of Paul's nephew. They will also find a fine example of courage in Paul's brave defence on the Castle stairs. The entire story is most spirited, and will stir the souls of the boys and girls.

The Older Classes will find in this lesson a powerful warning against religious prejudice and fanaticism, also a glorious example of courage in standing up for the right. Both are greatly needed in our day.

Question Suggested for Discussion : How far is prudence, such as Paul showed in the matter of his vow and in dividing the Sanhedrin, compatible with Christian courage and trust ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 57.

Place. — Jerusalem, the temple, the council chamber of the Sanhedrin, the Tower of Antonia ; then to Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul*. Wilson's *The Church We Forget*. Iverach's *St. Paul, His Life and Times*. Meyer's *Paul, a Servant of Jesus Christ*.

Maclaren's *Expositions*. Vaughan's *The Church of the First Days*. Jefferson's *The Character of Paul*. Geikie's *New Testament Hours*, Vol. 3.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christianity and compromise.

The Nazirite vow.

Why Paul had enemies.

Roman soldiers in the New Testament.

Instances of Paul's courage.

Paul in his trial compared with Christ in his.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul's Valiant Stand in Jerusalem.

I. PAUL ATTACKED BY A MOB, Acts 21:17-40.

Observing the law.

Religious bigots assail Paul.

Paul addresses the mob.

Christianity and courage.

II. PAUL ASSERTS HIS ROMAN RIGHTS, Acts 22:1-29.

The apostle tells his story.

The mission to the Gentiles.

The attempted scourging.

Bigotry versus Christianity.

III. PAUL PRESERVED FROM HIS ENEMIES, Acts 22:30-23:35.

Paul before the Sanhedrin.

Paul cheered by a vision.

Paul saved from assassination.

The Christian's strong defence.

I. PAUL ATTACKED BY A MOB, Acts 21:17-40. OBSERVING THE LAW. The reception given Paul by the church in Jerusalem could hardly fail to have been a joyful occasion. Not only did the great missionary come bringing a splendid gift to the poor of the mother church, but he had, as they all knew, a wonderful story to tell of the spread of Christianity to distant lands. James, our Lord's brother, presided, as he had presided over the famous church council which had decided the terms of admission of Gentiles to the Christian church. Peter could not have been there, as at the first church council, or he would have been mentioned in Luke's account ; and probably all the other members of the original Twelve were away evangelizing in distant regions, following their Master's instructions. Paul presented the gifts of

the Gentile churches, and his hearers glorified the Lord when they learned of the large ingathering of Gentiles under the ministry of Paul and his assistants.

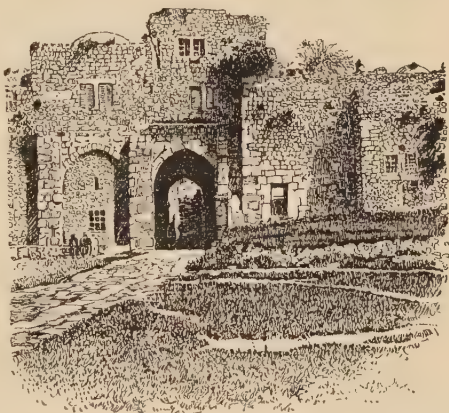
But immediately the old suspicion of the Gentiles and of Paul as their special apostle broke out afresh, and the Jewish Christians asked Paul to prove his loyalty to the ancient practices of his race, and so relieve the anxiety of the thousands of Jewish Christians who were afraid that Paul's labors among the Gentiles would undermine the regard in which Moses and his laws were held. They made the following proposal to Paul. There were four Christian men who were in the midst of the ceremonies of the Nazirite vow, described in Num. 6: 1-21. The entire period during which the vow was observed seems to have been thirty days, but any one who wished might join in the final purification ceremonies of the vow, lasting seven days, especially if he paid for those whom he joined the cost of the required sacrifices. At the conclusion of the vow the heads of the devotees were shaved, and the hair was burned with the sacrificial animals on the altar. The last week of the vow was spent in the temple, that defilement might not be incurred accidentally.

Paul willingly agreed to this arrangement, for he had already at least once before made the same vow and fulfilled it. He was a true Jew, and honored the laws of Moses. He would not impose the Jewish rites on the Gentiles, and he would make a personal stand against bigotry, but he wisely made friends for his cause whenever he could do so without compromising principle or betraying his converts.

RELIGIOUS BIGOTS ASSAIL PAUL. This attempt to please his Jewish critics brought upon Paul one of the heaviest troubles of his entire career. There were some Jews from Asia (Asia Minor) in the city, and perhaps they were some of Paul's bitter foes who had raised the riot against him in Ephesus and by so doing had succeeded in driving him from the city. The same tactics were used in Jerusalem, for, finding Paul in one of the sacred courts of the temple which Gentiles entered only on pain of death, they laid violent hands on the apostle and at once raised an outcry, calling "Help! Help!" as if Paul were the most desperate criminal. Then to the crowd which speedily collected they explained that their captive had been teaching everywhere against the Jews and the Mosaic law and the temple, and that he had carried this iniquity to the climax of bringing Greeks into the temple courts forbidden to them, thus polluting the holy place.

The only ground for the absurd charge was that, before Paul began the performance of his Nazirite vow, they had seen him in the city conversing with a single Greek from Ephesus, named Trophimus! But this groundless charge enraged the Jews, who dragged Paul out of the temple, the Levites promptly closing the temple doors as they saw that a storm was brewing. The mob hustled the apostle about from one to another, every one giving him a cowardly blow, the plan being to kill him among them, so that no one person could be held responsible for the murder. The design had probably been carefully thought out in advance.

Fortunately, while this dastardly attempt was in progress, the Roman authorities got into action. Jerusalem was so turbulent, especially when it was crowded during the feasts, that the Romans kept troops always ready to subdue mobs. The colonel (*chiliarch*, "ruler of a thousand") of one of their regiments (*cohorts*) was Claudius Lysias (Acts 23: 26), who was stationed in the Tower of Antonia. This fortress, built by Herod, adjoined the temple area on the northwest, and so was very close to the scene of trouble. As soon as Colonel Claudius heard the disturbance, or received word of it, he took soldiers and rushed down to the street. There, pushing back the mob, he arrested Paul, partly because he might have been some criminal and partly in order to save his life, had him bound securely with two chains, and hurried him up the outside stairway of the



From a photograph by Wilson.
A Portion of the Government Palace on the Supposed Site of
the Tower of Antonia.

ACTS 21: 37. And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee? And he said, Dost thou know Greek?

38. Art thou not then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins?

39. But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tär'-sūs in Çi-lí'-çiä, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people.

40. And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, saying,

castle. The disappointed mob pressed after the soldiers so fiercely that they were obliged to lift Paul up bodily and carry him, to keep him from being torn to pieces. But even under these terrifying circumstances Paul retained his presence of mind and all his courage.

PAUL ADDRESSES THE MOB. 37. And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee? The party had reached a landing and Paul could be set down on his feet. Soldiers at the foot of the stairway held back the mob with their shields. There was an instant's lull, which Paul utilized. And he said, Dost thou know Greek? Paul was brought up in a Greek city, and probably spoke Greek as fluently as Aramaic, the popular Hebrew. Moreover, he had been at work for many years in Greek countries, so that Greek would come most readily to his tongue in such an emergency as this. His evangelistic work when he reached Rome would imply that he also knew Latin.

38. Art thou not then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins? Claudius Lysias seems to have known that this Egyptian, whom he supposed Paul to be, could not speak Greek. "Assassins" is, literally, *Sicarii*, that is, "Men of the Dagger," referring to a set of thugs who went armed with concealed daggers. They mingled with the crowds, thrust at their victim with the dagger, and then diverted attention from themselves by raising an outcry against the murderer, leading the crowd in the search for him. In this way they slew the high priest Jonathan. As to "the Egyptian," he was, as Josephus tells us, a famous impostor who claimed to be a prophet and led about thirty thousand people to the Mount of Olives, telling them that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall down as the walls of Jericho had fallen in the days of Joshua; then they could enter the city and plunder at their will. Felix was then governor. He marched against the Egyptian, killed many of his deluded followers and took many prisoners, the impostor saving himself by flight. This was later than the arrest of Paul, as the number, four thousand, shows, and Claudius Lysias must have referred to some earlier exploit of the Egyptian.

39. But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. Tarsus was an important city, as we have already seen (see the lesson for July 1), especially famous for its university and its distinguished scholars. Paul used a polished Greek which of itself substantiated his claim. And I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people. Paul was above all things a herald of the cross of Christ; he saw before him a seething crowd, with who knew how many souls in it that might be won for the Saviour. He was not the man to miss such a chance as that, but would "buy up the opportunity," to use his own words. The fact that the rioters, many of them, were thirsting for his blood gave him no concern at all. Paul was a thoroughly brave man, a hero, and he had faced mobs many times before when he had no guard of Roman soldiers but was quite unprotected.

40. And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people. The two chains used had presumably bound both of Paul's hands, and the chief captain seems to have been so impressed with the apostle's bearing that he ordered him freed; therefore he could use his hand in a gesture commanding silence. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language. Paul spoke in the Aramaic dialect of Palestine, which most if not all of the crowd could understand. They would be surprised that the Roman

ACTS 22:1. Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you.

22. And they gave him audience unto this word; and they lifted up their voice, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

23. And as they cried out, and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air,

commander allowed his prisoner to speak, and that fact, together with Paul's masterful gesture, brought the "great silence."

CHRISTIANITY AND COURAGE. "We are not called, in these calm easy days, to feats of bodily courage in the Saviour's service. It is well. We might find ourselves all unequal to such enterprises. The courage to which we are called is known rather as a moral courage. It is that independence, of judgment and action, which befits one who must stand at last alone to give account of himself to God. It is the power to avow now what we shall feel then; to be now what we shall wish to have been then." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

II. PAUL ASSERTS HIS ROMAN RIGHTS, Acts 22:1-29. THE APOSTLE TELLS HIS STORY. 1. Brethren and fathers. With "brethren" Paul asserts his kinship with the throng, and by "fathers" his respect for the Jewish authorities. It was a most tactful introduction. Hear ye the defence which I now make unto you. Paul proposed to defend himself against the charge of profaning the temple, and also the charge that he had been untrue to his nation and to the national religion. It was far more a defence of Christianity than of himself. He planned also to defend his special mission to the Gentiles, but the mob did not let him finish.

Paul began in a politic way by declaring his Jewish birth and his thoroughly Jewish education under the famous scholar and teacher of Jerusalem, Gamaliel. He had been one of the chief enemies of Christianity, one of the leading persecutors of the Christians, imprisoning women as well as men and handing them over to the executioner. No one was so unlikely as he to be converted to Christianity.

Nevertheless he had been converted by the miraculous appearance of the blinding light on the Damascus road, and the sight of the risen Jesus. As further witness to the supernatural power of Christianity, his sight was restored by a miracle, and at the same time he was bidden to devote his life to Christian preaching. And as yet one other proof that Christianity was from God, while he was praying in the temple, — and he doubtless pointed to it as he spoke, — he fell into a trance and again saw Jesus, and received from him a warning to leave Jerusalem if he would save his life. With this warning the Lord coupled the prophetic command, "Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles." That command became the key-note of Paul's great career.

22. And they gave him audience unto this word. The hated word, "Gentiles," exploded their passions; for they had been silent up to that point, though they could not have been other than angered by Paul's account of his conversion to Christianity. And they lifted up their voice, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. The essence of Paul's iniquity, in the minds of these bigots, was that he had associated with the despised Greeks and treated them as brothers. That was the horrible crime for which he deserved to die!

23. And as they cried out, and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air. "The tempestuous fury of a Jewish outbreak was something appalling. Outside the soldiers, who were around and on the stairs, swayed thousands of wildly excited men, with long black hair, in long dark gaberlines, and black tarboosh-like head coverings,



From Duruy.

Roman Soldier.

24. The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, bidding that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know for what cause they so shouted against him.

25. And when they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?

26. And when the centurion heard it, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman.

27. And the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said, Yea.

28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, But I am a *Roman* born.

their great eyes shining with excitement, their features convulsed and contorted by fanatical rage; so frenzied, and for the time besides themselves, that their teeth gnashed at their intended victim as if they would fain have torn him in pieces, like wild beasts; the roaring tempest of their outcries, varied by their casting dust into the air, tearing their clothes, or twitching at them madly in their Oriental demoniac rage." — *Cunningham Geikie*.

24. The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, bidding that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know for what cause they so shouted against him. Lysias probably did not understand Hebrew, and thought that Paul had been making some outrageous speech which had so inflamed the passion of the mob. He had doubtless had experience of the obstinacy of Jewish prisoners, and knew no way to elicit truth from them but by force.

25. And when they had tied him up with the thongs. "The soldiers at once tied his hands together, stripped his back bare, and bent him forward into the position for that horrid and often fatal examination by torture which, not far from that very spot, his Lord had undergone. Thrice before, on that scarred back, had Paul felt the fasces of Roman lictors; five times the nine and thirty strokes of Jewish thongs; here was a new form of agony, the whip — the horrible flagellum — which the Romans employed to force by torture the confession of the truth." — *F. W. Farrar*. Paul said unto the centurion that stood by. The centurion (a captain, a commander of one hundred) had been deputed by Colonel Lysias to superintend the common soldiers who were binding Paul, and he would later superintend the flogging. Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? Both Paul and the centurion knew well that the *Porcian Law* forbade under heavy penalties the scourging of a Roman citizen. To claim falsely to be a Roman citizen was an offence punishable by death, so that Paul's implied statement that he was a Roman citizen carried its own substantiation with it.

26. And when the centurion heard it, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman. Captain and colonel seem to have been on rather intimate terms, or else the bluntness and freedom of the question arose from the centurion's fright at their joint peril before the law.

27. And the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said, Yea. "Is it possible that you are a Roman?" The question seems spoken in a tone of horror, perhaps of indignation because, in talking with Lysias before, Paul had simply stated that he was a Jew of Tarsus.

28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. "This freedom," in the King James version, gave its title to Hutchinson's well-known novel. The word was used much as we to-day speak of bestowing on some distinguished person the "freedom" of a city, that is, its civic privileges. Some of the Roman noblemen who were favorites of the Emperor were from time to time allowed to enrich themselves by selling the Roman citizenship, and Claudius Lysias had thus paid a large price for his "freedom." Paul was evidently a poor man, and the chief captain wondered how he had been able to purchase the great privilege. And Paul said, But I am a *Roman* born. Paul was born in a "free city," for Tarsus made its own laws and chose its own officials; but its citizens were not thereby Romans. Paul's father, it is conjectured, or some more distant ancestor, had been made a Roman citizen as a reward for some fine service he had done in the cause of the empire.

29. They then that were about to examine him straightway departed from him: and the chief captain also was afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

29. They then that were about to examine him straightway departed from him: and the chief captain also was afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. It was not forbidden to put a Roman into chains for safekeeping, but only to bind him, as here, for the purpose of scourging. The very next verse shows that Paul was kept in chains, and, indeed, he wore chains several times during his career of hardship and frequent imprisonment, sometimes for years at a time.

BIGOTRY VERSUS CHRISTIANITY. "The cry, 'Away with him,' which assailed the ears of Christ, was not uttered once only, but rings and re-echoes down the annals of history. Paul heard its ominous note. So did Savonarola. So has many an idealist when surrounded on every side by the insurgent selfishness of an irritated society." — *P. Whitwell Wilson*.

"Paul's mind was wonderfully hospitable. He could make room for the new and still have space for the old. He could become a Christian and remain a Pharisee. He could be a faithful follower of Jesus, and still shave his head, and take his place as a Nazirite in the temple." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.* It is this breadth of spirit which keeps a Christian from becoming a bigot.

III. PAUL PRESERVED FROM HIS ENEMIES, Acts 22:30—23:35. PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. Claudius Lysias was an officer of the law, and he would not let Paul go without learning whether he had really committed any offence of which the Empire should take cognizance. He had discovered that the difficulty was religious, and therefore he called into the case the chief religious body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish senate or council of seventy chief priests, elders, and scribes, over which the high priest presided.

The great apostle to the Gentiles, standing before the august body of which he had been a member, addressed them as "Brethren," and started out with the confident statement that all his life, up to that day, he had "lived before God in all good conscience." The high priest Ananias, who was presiding, had at one time been suspended from office for some offence and sent to Rome. Perhaps he regarded Paul's words as a reflection on himself. At any rate, in a towering rage he ordered his officers to smite the apostle on the mouth. Mightily indignant, Paul shouted: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall" (that is, "Thou hypocrite," seeming to be better than he was). Paul spoke prophetically, for Ananias did come to a violent end. Horrified, the bystanders cried, "Are you reviling God's high priest?" Paul was prompt with his disclaimer: "I did not know he was the high priest." Either the apostle's poor eyesight (for his vision was permanently injured by the blinding light on the Damascus road) was responsible for his mistake, or it was no mistake at all and Paul spoke ironically: "I did not know it was possible for a high priest to give such an iniquitous order."

The entire examination is reported by Luke in a very condensed form, but at some point in it Paul, well knowing that both Pharisees and Sadducees were represented in the Sanhedrin and knowing also their bitter hatred of each other, managed to divide his inquisitors by declaring that he was a Pharisee, and that he was persecuted because of his faith in the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection, a truth hotly denied by the Sadducees. Paul, indeed, made the resurrection of Jesus a cornerstone of his preaching everywhere, basing upon it his evidence for Christ's deity. At once the Pharisees in the council began to take Paul's side and the Sadducees to oppose them violently, and there arose such a hubbub that Lysias ordered Paul withdrawn from the contentious scene and brought back to the safety of Castle Antonia. The Sanhedrin had not helped him to discover much about Paul.

PAUL CHEERED BY A VISION (Acts 23:11). "That Paul's efforts to use these trying scenes for the glory of his Master were appreciated and accepted was made abundantly clear by the vision of the Lord, who bade him be of good cheer, and assured him that the witness which he had given from the steps of the castle and in the halls of the Sanhedrin should be repeated in Rome herself, at the very heart of the empire, where all the Gentiles should hear." — *Rev. F. B. Meyer, D.D.* Paul, whose aim was always for the big centers of population, had preached at Damascus, Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Athens, and Corinth. For years he had

looked longingly toward the greatest city of all, imperial Rome. Now his godly ambition is about to be realized, but in a way strangely different from his imagining. Faithful testimony is always rewarded by opportunities for further faithful testimony. Let the Christian be of good cheer : his Lord will protect him until his work is done.

PAUL SAVED FROM ASSASSINATION. Paul was thus saved for the time, but his enemies were implacable. They saw in Paul the ablest leader of the Christians, and judged that if he could be put out of the way, the hated religion would perish from the earth. Therefore forty of them banded themselves together, and swore that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. Their plan was a shrewd one. They would get the Sanhedrin to request the presence of the apostle for another examination, and as he was on his way to the council chamber a mob was to assail the soldiers escorting him, Paul was to be snatched from them, and put to death.

But once more the apostle was preserved. Paul had a nephew, the son of his sister, who evidently lived in Jerusalem. At once, disregarding his own safety, the brave young fellow went to his uncle and told him of the plot. Paul immediately sent his nephew to Claudius Lysias, who perceived that prompt action was necessary, as the enemies of his prisoner were evidently numerous, powerful, and determined.

"Seeing how serious was the state of matters thus revealed, the chief captain resolved to send Paul to Cæsarea, for he was responsible both for the life of the prisoner and the peace of the city. Had the Jews heard of the proposed expedition, or had the guard been less strong, an attack might have been made by them on the party. Every precaution was therefore taken. The soldiers, with Paul, set out at the third hour of the night ; and, guarded by two hundred soldiers, two hundred spearmen, and seventy horsemen, he travelled all night, and reached Antipatris. From this place the soldiers and spearmen returned to Jerusalem, and the horsemen conducted Paul to Cæsarea, and handed him over to Felix, the Roman governor. Antipatris was about fifty-two miles from Jerusalem, and about twenty-six from Cæsarea." — *Prof. James Iverach*. With Paul Lysias sent a letter to Governor Felix, acquainting him with the facts regarding the prisoner, and telling him that, as it seemed to be a dispute over Jewish law, he had asked Paul's accusers to go to Cæsarea, there to state their case against Paul before the governor. In the meantime, Felix would keep him safe.

THE CHRISTIAN'S STRONG DEFENCE. "Paul was immortal till his work was done. 'Be of good cheer, Paul ; thou must bear witness at Rome.' And so, for ourselves and for the gospel that we profess, the same divine Providence which orders events so that his servants may have the opportunities of witnessing to it, will take care that it shall not perish — notwithstanding all the premature jubilation of anti-Christian literature and thought in this day — until it has done its work. We need have no fear for ourselves, for though our blind eyes often fail to see, and our bleeding hearts often fail to accept, the conviction that there are no unfinished lives for his servants, yet we may be sure that he will watch over each of his children till they have finished the work that he gives them to do. And we may be sure, in regard to his great gospel, that nothing can sink the ship that carries Christ and his fortunes." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

LESSON VIII (22). — November 25.

THE PRAYERS OF PAUL. — Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Romans 1 : 8-10 ; Ephesians 1 : 15-23 ; 3 : 14-21 ; 1 Thessalonians 1 : 2-5.

PRINT Acts 20:36-38 ; Eph. 1:15, 16 ; 3:14-21.

(May be Used as a Thanksgiving Lesson.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Rejoice always ; pray without ceasing ; in everything give thanks.* — 1 THESS. 5 : 16-18.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 34 : 1-8.

Primary Topic : PAUL PRAYS FOR HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 1 : 15-23 ; 3 : 14-21 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 2-5. **Print** Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 1 : 15, 16.

Memory Verse : Pray one for another. Jas. 5 : 16 b.

Junior Topic : PAUL PRAYS FOR HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 1 : 15-23 ; 3 : 14-21 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 2-5. **Print Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 1 : 15, 16.**

Memory Verse : James 5 : 16 b.

Intermediate Topic : PAUL AS A MAN OF PRAYER.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN PAUL'S LIFE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will learn from the prayers of Paul how they themselves should pray : that they should pray often, unselfishly, and believingly. Teach them to pray for their dear ones and friends, for their homes and church, for their Sunday-school class, for their teachers, for their country, and for missions. Urge them to fill their prayers full of thanksgiving. Lay down a little order of prayer for them to try for a week, every day, and report next Sunday how they like it.

The Older Classes will study the prayer aspect of Paul's life, reaching out beyond the extracts that are the basis of the lesson, and gathering prayer lessons from all his many references to prayer in his writings. Call out personal testimonies to the reality and value of prayer. Close the session with a genuine class prayer meeting.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Can the reality of answers to prayers be proved scientifically ? If so, how ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The interview with the Ephesian elders, A.D. 57. First Thessalonians written A.D. 51 ; Romans, A.D. 57 ; Ephesians, A.D. 61 or 62.

Place. — The interview with the Ephesian elders, Miletus. First Thessalonians written at Corinth (first visit) ; Romans at Corinth (second visit), Ephesians at Rome (first Roman imprisonment).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Variety of Paul's prayers.
Purposes of Paul's prayers.
Characteristics of Paul's prayers.
What Paul taught about prayer.
Paul's prayers and Christ's.
Lessons for us from Paul's prayers.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Privilege and Power of Prayer.

I. PRAYING WITH OTHERS, Acts 20 : 36-38.

Paul prays with the Ephesian elders.
The blessedness of social prayer.

II. PRAYING FOR OTHERS, Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 3 : 14-21.

Paul prays for the Roman and Ephesian Christians.
The power of intercessory prayer.

III. GIVING THANKS IN PRAYER, Eph. 1 : 15-23 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 2-5.

Paul rejoices in the Ephesian and Thessalonian Christians.
The fruitfulness of praiseful prayer.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Bishop Slattery's *Why Men Pray*. Bounds's *The Essentials of Prayer, The Reality of Prayer, and The Possibilities of Prayer*. Pell's *What Did Jesus Really Teach about Prayer?* Aitken's *The Divine Ordinance of Prayer*. S. D. Gordon's *Quiet Talks on Prayer*. Watt's *The Strategic Value of Prayer*. Faris's *The Book of Answered Prayer*. Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. McFadyen's *The Way of Prayer*. Glenn Clark's *The Soul's Sincere Desire*. Bishop Brent's *With God in the World*. Dawson's *Prayer That Prevails*. Blanchard's *Getting Things from God*. "I Cried, He Answered," compiled by Henry W. Adams, and others. An important volume, *The Christian Doctrine of Prayer*, by Hastings. Moore's *The Christ-Controlled Life*.

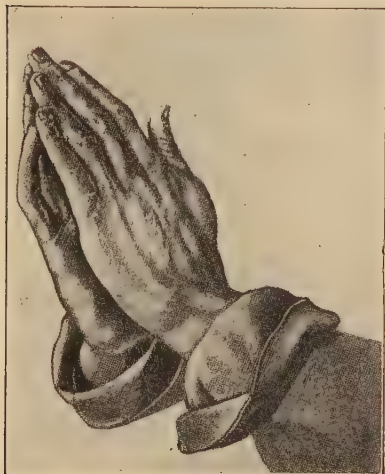
ACTS 20 : 36. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all.

I. PRAYING WITH OTHERS, Acts 20 : 36-38. Prayer was the main element in the fruitful life of Paul. He practised his own precept, and was "instant in prayer," praying "without ceasing." The New Testament record of his prayers furnishes rare incentive to the prayer life and noble examples for us to follow as we ourselves seek the strength, peace, and guidance that prayer alone can give. Praise to God was so conspicuous a feature of Paul's prayers that our study of them is especially suitable for the Thanksgiving season. Therefore the Lesson Committee has selected for us some of Paul's most characteristic prayers, which we are to consider in order to increase our own power in prayer. The first is the prayer of Paul with the elders of the church in Ephesus, who, on Paul's last journey to Jerusalem, went to Miletus at his request to converse with him ; see Lesson IV. of this quarter, October 28.

36. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. Paul had reviewed his work at Ephesus, had spoken of the hazardous journey which

37. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him,
38. Sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they brought him on his way unto the ship.

he was making, had foretold that this was their last sight of him, and at that solemn moment had warned them to be faithful to their trust. His words were surcharged with profound emotion, and stirred his hearers to the depths. Prayer was the natural and inevitable conclusion of such an address, and kneeling is the most suitable posture for prayer.



From a painting by Albrecht Dürer.
Praying Hands.

37. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him. We can imagine how tender Paul's prayer was, how full of love for the church. He carried to Christ all the needs of his hearers. He lifted their hearts with his to the throne of grace. Orientals are readier than we to show their emotions, and strong men are not ashamed of tears and kisses.

38. Sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. Perhaps some of them had been obliged to flee from Jerusalem because of persecution. All of them knew well the risk that Paul was running. Moreover, they knew that Paul had prophetic powers. And they brought him on his way unto the ship. Miletus was at some distance from the harbor where Paul's ship lay, and the elders, following the Eastern custom, went with Paul as far as they

could on his journey. They wished to get as much as possible of the inspiration and wisdom that radiated from all he said or did.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF SOCIAL PRAYER. Prayer meetings are as old as Christianity. Our Lord said that where two or three were met together in his name, he would be in the midst of them. Prayer meetings were held in different parts of Jerusalem when Peter was imprisoned. As the early Christian churches went from house to house, for their meetings, the voice of prayer was constantly heard in their homes.

In social prayer, that is, in prayer meetings or when a congregation is led in prayer by the pastor, all hearts are bound together by the blessed experience. That is the reason for the common expression, "Let us *unite* in prayer." "When we really pray together we are lost in God; and in God we find one another." — *Bishop Charles L. Slattery.*

"As a tree has its root hidden in the ground and its stem growing up into the sunlight, so prayer needs equally for its full development the hidden secrecy in which the soul meets God alone, and the public fellowship with those who find in the name of Jesus their common meeting-place." — *Andrew Murray.*

"In a book of personal reminiscences we are told that when a certain American publisher moved into his new home, made possible by hard-earned business success, he departed from the previous habit of silence. Turning to his family, he remarked: 'We have much to be grateful for. Let us give thanks.' From that time forth, adds the chronicler, grace was said before meals in that household." — *Marshall Dawson.* Every family has much to be thankful for, all the time.

Family prayers are less and less observed as life becomes more complicated, family interests more diverse, and worldliness more attractive and compelling. A return to vital religion in any community always brings with it a return to the practice of family prayers. Nothing so knits a family together as household worship. At the family altar the children get their first and usually their strongest and most abiding religious impressions. There the head of the family takes his rightful place as priest of the household. When family prayers are at their best, every member of the household

- EPH. 3 : 14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
 15. From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
 16. That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man ;
 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith ; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

has some part in the blessed exercise. Of all the forms of social prayer this is the happiest and most fruitful.

II. **PRAYING FOR OTHERS**, Rom. 1 : 8-10 ; Eph. 3 : 14-21. PAUL'S CONSTANT PRAYERS FOR THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS. Paul, writing from Corinth to the Roman Christians whom he hoped to visit soon (though not under the sad circumstances which came about), introduces at the start of his letter the note of thanksgiving which so often enters into his writings. His thanks were offered to God, *through Christ the Way to God*, and *for the faith of the Roman Christians which all the world knew about*. Here is a little lesson in prayer : its Object, its Mediator, and its chief theme, which should be praise ; and not praise for secular blessings mainly, but primarily for the joys of the spiritual life.

But Paul's prayers were by no means bare of petition. They were unceasing prayers, persistent prayers, constant prayers, having for their one request that the Lord would open the way to wider service, that as Paul had preached the gospel in so many great cities it might be his high privilege to preach in the greatest of all cities, at the very center of the world of the time, in imperial Rome. That was the sort of "prosperity" Paul sought "by the will of God," the blessing of an enlarged ministry. No thought of the many hardships involved, or of the increased perils. Only the thought of his Saviour and the desire to make him known to as many as possible.

Here is a hint as to the supreme purpose of prayer, which is to make us "meet for the Master's use" and to win the chance of pleasing him by the finest and most useful labors in his vineyard. How many of our prayers will stand this Pauline test? As more and more of them reach this standard, how Christ's church will grow, to the blessing of all the earth !

PAUL PRAYS FOR THE EPHESIAN CHRISTIANS, Eph. 3 : 14. **For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father.** Paul's letter to the Ephesians was really a circular letter to all the churches of Asia of which Ephesus was the center. Paul wrote the letter in his prison in Rome. "For this cause" goes back to the first verse of this chapter and repeats its opening words. Paul had been writing about the great spiritual temple of which the Ephesians were a part. "For this cause" the apostle prays fervently for them, that they may be worthy of their place in that temple of God. It is a prayer that every Christian may well offer for himself and for all other Christians.

15. **From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.** There is a point in the Greek which cannot be translated into English ; for the Greek word for "family" is derived from the word for "father," and means literally "fatherhood." Thus the family is literally "named" from the Father. The thought is that God is the source and head of all union among Christians, the great Architect of the spiritual temple about which Paul has been writing.

16. **That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory.** God is gloriously rich, infinitely rich, and can easily answer Paul's prayer for the Ephesians. God's answers to prayer are "according to" God's resources, and so they are always magnificent answers. **That ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man.** Paul refers to the Holy Spirit often in this Epistle. He is the agent through whom God transmits his own power to the soul of every true Christian. There can be no greater object of prayer than this.

17. **That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.** That is why we are to receive God's power through the Holy Spirit, that we may prepare our hearts as Christ's dwelling-place. We cannot do this except as we have faith in God and in the Holy Spirit and in Christ. **To the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love.** Love is the soil in which the Christian life grows : love to man and love to God.

18. **May be strong to apprehend with all the saints.** "Saints" are holy men and women, who by the power of God are separated from sin and united to God. Every

18. May be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

19. And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.

20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21. Unto him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

Christian should be a saint. **What is the breadth and length and height and depth.** The divine love is thus pictured as a vast palace or temple, or perhaps as the measureless universe : it is as broad and long, as deep and high as space itself. Certainly "strength" is needed to "apprehend" it, to grasp the thought in all its splendor and beauty and power.

19. **And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.** How can we know what exceeds knowledge? We can know as much as our powers of mind and soul can grasp ; and in the grasping our mind and soul are ever enlarged so that we can apprehend more. Thus the marvellous process goes on endlessly. **That ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.** "Unto" implies that the "fulness of God," the completeness of the divine nature, is the goal of the Christian. Nothing less than that is his aim, and Paul prays that nothing less than that may be the attainment of his friends in Ephesus. There is no more daring conception in all the Bible.

20. **Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.** All that God is or has is involved in the Christian's prayer for himself and for all members of Christ's church. The Christian in himself is not "able" for this unimaginable achievement, but, happily for him, he has for an ally One who is able, abundantly able, to do all we can pray for, all we can conceive of, even to bestow upon our poor, weak human lives all of himself. Let us think of his Ability when we pray. **According to the power that worketh in us.** The power of God's Holy Spirit, the agent through whom God communicates of himself to us.

21. **Unto him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus.** God's glory is to be shown and increased in Christ's church, as it already has been shown in the life and death of Christ, and as it will be shown more and more through the works of Christ dwelling in men. **Unto all generations for ever and ever.** Literally, "unto all the generations of the age of the ages," the strongest possible expression of continuance. Let us remember this when our faith wavers, and Christianity seems decreasing in power, perishing from the earth. **Amen.** This is a confirmatory adverb meaning "surely." In translating Christ's words it is rendered "Verily." Paul means that there is to be no doubt whatever of all these glorious possibilities as the result of faith-filled prayer.

THE POWER OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER. "From the days of Abraham downwards God's people have interceded for others, and have been encouraged to do so. Our Lord himself prayed for others, and taught his disciples to do so — yes, even for those who despitefully used them. And we find St. Paul exhorting us, in the most emphatic way, to engage in intercession." — *Canon W. Hay M. H. Aitken.*

Dr. John T. Faris, in his inspiring *Book of Answered Prayer*, tells of the teacher of a Sunday-school class of six girls who had not been able to win any of them to Christ. Deeply grieved, he began to pray for them by name each day, and taught more earnestly than ever before. He gave his prayer list to each of the four elders of the church, and they joined their prayers to his. He talked with the girls separately in private, urging them to confess Christ and join his church. He told the class of the coming communion service and of the meeting of pastor and elders beforehand to talk with those who wished to join the church. To his unbounded joy he learned that all of the six girls went before that little meeting and gave so clear testimonies that their names were entered on the church roll at once in the order of their appearance and examination. With wonder the faithful teacher examined the roll : the names were in exactly the order of the prayer list which he had used, and the elders also !

A woman once came to S. D. Gordon deeply concerned about her brother, who was not a Christian. "But," she asked, "how can I pray for his conversion? He is a free agent, is he not? And God will not save a man against his will." Here is the answer given : "Man *is* a free agent, so far as God is concerned ; utterly, wholly

EPH. I : 15. For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which *ye show* toward all the saints,

free. And, he is the most enslaved agent on the earth, so far as sin and selfishness and prejudice are concerned. The purpose of our praying is not to force or coerce his will ; never that. It is to *free* his will of the warping influences that now twist it awry. It is to get the dust out of his eyes so that his sight shall be clear. And once he is free, able to see aright, to balance things without prejudice, the whole probability is in favor of his using his will to choose the only right." — *S. D. Gordon*.

"It is hard to conceive of an influence more likely to preserve in temptation and to strengthen for duty than the knowledge that prayers are offered on our behalf, or even the memory of prayers once offered. The voices, some hushed, that once pleaded with God for us — voices of father or mother or some faithful friend — plead with us still, and it is hard to resist such a plea." — *James Hastings*.

"There is no more delicate service in the whole round of human action than that of intercessory prayer. It is so hidden as to have a special beauty on that account.



Jesus at Prayer.

Bida.

While men are all unconscious that we are thinking of them, we fold our arms about them and bring them up before God for blessing and guidance. Intercessory prayer might be defined as loving our neighbor on our knees." — *Bishop Charles H. Brent*.

"A celebrated statesman once told this country to 'think imperially,' and the dictum of manufacturers to-day is that we must 'trade imperially.' Is not the burning message of the gospel to the church of God to 'pray imperially' ? David Brainerd, in his diary, wrote these words : 'My soul was drawn out very much for the world. I grasped for multitudes of souls.' The prayer spirit begotten of God must grasp 'for multitudes of souls.' " — *Rev. Gordon Watt*.

"Fear not, faint not, doubt not, cease not,

Pray through hindrances untold ;

He is faithful that has promised, —

He will nothing good withhold!" — *Mabel Johnston Camp*.

III. GIVING THANKS IN PRAYER. Eph. I : 15-23 ; I Thess. I : 2-5. PAUL REJOICES IN THE EPHESIAN CHRISTIANS. Eph. I : 15. For this cause I also. I, Paul, as well as others who are thinking of you Ephesians and praying for you. The "cause" is the goodness of God in the salvation of men, about which Paul had been writing. Having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you. Members of the churches in Asia had visited the apostle in his Roman prison. And the love which *ye show* toward all the saints. Those are the two reports which would most cheer Paul's heart in his prison, news of the continued faith of his converts and of their practical love, "faith working by love."

16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

16. **Cease not to give thanks for you.** Paul's gratitude showed itself expressly whenever he prayed, and ran as a happy undertone beneath all his hours. **Making mention of you in my prayers.** Paul named them over before God as if he wanted God to share his joy in them, one by one; and that is exactly what God did.

REJOICING IN CHRIST (vs. 17-23). The remainder of the passage prays more in detail for the Ephesians, that they may come to know more of Jesus Christ, of their eternal hope in him, of their glorious inheritance through him, of the exceeding greatness of his power which he will grant to believers, and of his majestic station at God's right hand in heaven, far above all rulers and dominions, and with all things in subjection under his feet. This is the best prayer we can offer for others and for ourselves as well, that we may come into a fuller understanding of our Saviour.

PAUL REJOICES IN THE THESSALONIAN CHRISTIANS (1 Thess. 1:2-5). The church in Thessalonica was one of the earliest churches founded by Paul in Europe, and his first letter to them is the earliest of all the New Testament writings. Our verses stand at the opening of the letter, which begins with a burst of gratitude for the Thessalonian Christians. Paul's prayers are unceasingly of them, thankful to God for their faith-filled and loving labors, and for the patient hopefulness with which they look forward. Paul rejoices in God's choice of them, and in the power of Christian testimony and service which the Holy Spirit has brought them. It is a beautiful picture of a Christian church. Is it a picture of our church, of our Sunday school? Would Paul rejoice so in us?

THE FRUITFULNESS OF PRAISEFUL PRAYER. "Wherever there is true prayer, there thanksgiving and gratitude stand hard by, ready to respond to the answer when it comes. Giving thanks is the very life of prayer."—*Rev. Edward M. Bounds, D.D.*

"How wonderful Paul's thanksgiving was, and how deeply it puts most of us to shame, we can only fully realize when we remember the fierce, hard life he was compelled to lead for the gospel's sake, face to face repeatedly with danger and death. How real, how near, how dear must Christ have been to him, to have lifted him so easily and triumphantly over afflictions so manifold!"—*Prof. John Edgar McFadyen.*

"A great basket-ball player told me once that just as the ball left his hand he could tell by the thrill of joy that came to him whether or not the ball would go through the basket. In the same way many ball-players know when their bat meets the ball whether it will be a safe hit or not. Golf-players, too, by the joyous thrill which goes through them at the moment of the club's contact with the ball, know when they have made a perfect stroke."—*Glenn Clark.* In the same way the joy and gratitude that accompany perfect prayer are an indication that the answer to prayer is inevitable.

"There are certain church prayer meetings where the voice of praise is continually heard. They are unspeakably delightful, — to hear one thanking God for the salvation of a father, and another for the salvation of a husband, and a third for the salvation of a child, and a fourth for the healing of a sick one, and a fifth for the supplying of a need, and a sixth for the opening of a door to employment, and a seventh for the safe return of a friend, and so on. I do not believe that there is anything which could be done in our prayer meetings and church assemblies to quicken the fires of divine life in the souls of men more than to have an epidemic of thanksgiving." — *President Charles A. Blanchard.*

"One reason why there is so little of the spirit of praise and gratitude in our hearts is that we look to God for cake rather than bread." — *Edward Leigh Pell.*

"'God give you a good day, my friend,' said Tauler of Strasburg to a beggar whom he met at a time when he was seeking a deeper knowledge of God. 'I thank God,' said the beggar, 'I never have a bad day.' Tauler, astonished, changed the form of his salutation. 'God give you a happy life, friend.' 'I thank God,' said the beggar, 'I am never unhappy.' 'Never unhappy!' said Tauler; 'what do you mean?' 'Well,' rejoined the beggar, 'when it is fine, I thank God; when it rains, I thank God; when I have plenty, I thank God; when I am hungry, I thank God; and since God's will is my will, and whatsoever pleases him pleases me, why should I say I am unhappy when I am not?' 'But what,' said Tauler, 'if God were to cast you hence into hell — how then?' Whereat the beggar paused a moment, and then lifting his eyes upon him he answered, 'And if he did, I should have two arms to em-

brace him with — the arm of my faith, wherewith I lean upon his holy humanity, and the arm of my love, wherewith I am united to his ineffable Deity ; and thus one with him, he would descend thither with me, and there would I infinitely rather be with him than anywhere else without him.' 'But who are you?' said Tauler, taken aback by the sublimity of the reply. 'I am a king,' said the beggar. 'A king?' said Tauler; 'where is your kingdom?' 'In my own heart,' said the beggar.' — *E. W. Moore.*

LESSON IX (23). — December 2.

PAUL BEFORE HIS JUDGES. — Acts 24:1—26:32.

PRINT Acts 24:24-27; 26:19-29.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.* — ACTS 26:19.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 25:1-6.

Primary Topic : PAUL ON TRIAL.

Lesson Material : Acts 24:1—26:32. Print 24:24-27; 26:19-29.

Memory Verse : My faithfulness and my lovingkindness shall be with him.
Ps. 89:24.

Junior Topic : PAUL ON TRIAL.

Lesson Material : Acts 24:1—26:32. Print 24:24-27; 26:19-29.

Memory Verse : Ps. 89:24.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL ON THE WITNESS STAND.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL DEFENDS HIS LIFE WORK.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will find in this lesson some helpful teachings on standing up for Jesus and for religion under difficult circumstances. Apply Paul's example to your pupil's lives : What are they to do if some comrade should take Christ's name in vain? What are they to do when tempted to use Christ's day in a way he would disapprove? Can they show to every one that they are Christians in any better way than by going to church?

The Older Classes have in this lesson four fine character studies : Felix, the worldly minded; Festus, honest but bewildered; Agrippa, crafty and base; and Paul, manly, brave, and Christlike. Each character may be studied by a different member of the class, giving a four-fold presentation of the lesson.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Do our courts adopt the best methods in order to learn the truth about the cases brought before them?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Morrison's *The Footsteps of the Flock*. Sauvin in *The World's Great Sermons*, Vol. 3. Knox Little's *The Journey of Life*. Trench's *Westminster and Other Sermons*. Dewey's *Discourses*. Kingsley's *Discipline*. Martyn's *Sermons*. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Talmage's *Sermons*, Third Series. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Vol. 4. Woods's *At the Temple Church*. Kelman's *Things Eternal*. Glazebrook's *Prospice*.

Gordon's *Revelation and the Ideal*. Horton's *The Conquered World*. Giesy's *The I Ams of Christ*. Gunsaulus's *Paths to the City of God*. Gould's *In What Life Consists*. Beecher's *Sermons*, Vol. 1.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 59.

Place. — Cæsarea, the Roman capital



of Judæa, on the seacoast northwest of Jerusalem.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

A comparison of the various accounts of Paul's conversion given in the Acts.

The character of Felix.

The character of Festus.

The character of Agrippa.

The Christian arguments on which Paul relied most.

Paul as an example of the best way to bear trouble.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Paul Defends His Life Work.

I. PAUL BEFORE FELIX, Acts 24.

The charge of Tertullus.

The defence of Paul.

Felix procrastinates.

"A convenient season."

II. PAUL BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA,

Acts 25, 26.

The appeal to Cæsar.

The arrival of Agrippa.

Paul's address before Agrippa.

Obedying the heavenly vision.

I. PAUL BEFORE FELIX, Acts 24. **THE CHARGE OF TERTULLUS.** We left Paul in prison in Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judæa, on the Mediterranean coast northwest of Jerusalem. His prison was not a cell, but a room in the palace built by Herod and now occupied by the Roman governor of Judæa, Felix. This man,

with the exception of Nero, was probably the worst with whom Paul ever had to do. He was a spendthrift, a man of mean and despicable character, and quite as cruel as Nero himself. He was capable of every wickedness, but he was too shrewd to harm an uncondemned Roman citizen, such as Paul was; so he merely kept him under guard in his palace.

Five days after Paul arrived in Cæsarea his Jewish foes reached that place, Lysias having told them where to look for Paul. Some



Cæsarea. From a photograph by Bonfills.

Ruins of Prison where St. Paul was confined for two years.

of the elders of the Sanhedrin came, the Sadducees who were opposed to Paul the Pharisee. They were led by the high priest Ananias, the abominable man whom Paul had justly called a "whited wall" (Acts 23:3). He would be white with anger against the bold apostle. With them they brought a hired advocate, a Roman lawyer named Tertullus, who would know the Roman law and be able to make it appear that Paul was seeking to overthrow the Roman power in Palestine — the same charge that was brought against Christ at his trial before the Roman governor Pilate.

Tertullus began in approved lawyer fashion by flattering the "most noble Felix," and praising his rule. Then he proceeded to charge Paul with being "a pestilent fellow," "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," and — worst of all — a fomentor of Jewish insurrections in every land. Furthermore, he declared that Paul had tried to profane the temple. These abominable accusations were reiterated by the Jews who came with Tertullus, and it must be remembered that these men were the religious heads of the Jewish nation, members of the chief assembly of the Jews and its president. To such a pass had the Jewish people come!

THE DEFENCE OF PAUL. When the apostle had a chance to reply — and we must remember that the account is greatly condensed — Paul began his speech with no rhetorical flourishes, and with no false flattery of Felix, whose wretched character was well known to him. His defence was a categorical denial of his enemies' charges, and a demand that they be required to bring evidence and proof. Paul's sole offence, he declared, was in serving the God of the Jewish people according to the new fashion called The Way, having for his prominent teaching a belief in the resurrection of the

ACTS 24: 24. But after certain days, Felix came with Drū-sil'-lā, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.

25. And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me.

dead, a belief which, as Felix knew, was contrary to the views of the Sadducees before him. The governor was not unacquainted with the teachings of Christianity, and at once recognized Paul as what he was, an advocate of the new religious views that had originated in Jesus. Therefore he postponed further consideration of the matter

until the chief captain, Lysias, could come from Jerusalem and testify, and in the meantime he placed Paul in charge of a centurion, but gave him considerable liberty, and especially allowed his friends free access to him. Among these friends would be Philip the evangelist, who lived in Cæsarea, and also, we may be quite certain, Luke his physician, who wrote this account.

FELIX PROCRASTINATES. 24. But after certain days. The governor did not always live in Cæsarea, and after the first examination of Paul he had gone away somewhere. Now he returns. **Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jew-**



Paul before Felix and Drusilla.

ess. This Drusilla was not the lawful wife of Felix, for she was the wife of Azizus, King of Emesa, and Felix stole her away from him. She was a daughter of Herod Agrippa I., the man who slew the apostle James, the brother of John, with the sword, and who also threw Peter into the prison from which he was miraculously delivered. Doubtless Drusilla had heard of these events, and she knew of course of her father's horrible death, and of the impiety to which it was charged (Acts 12: 21-23). She was a beautiful young woman, only about eighteen years old at this time. **And sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.** The implication is that Drusilla joined Felix in the desire to hear Paul. She was anything but a strict Jewess, or she would not have married a Gentile, and might have sympathized with Paul because he was persecuted by the stricter Jews. What Paul talked about was the faith that Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth who was crucified as a criminal, was in reality the Christ, the long-expected Messiah, the Son of God and the Saviour of men. That is "the faith in Christ Jesus."

25. **And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come.** Here was not the philosophical discourse on the resurrection and immortality for which Felix was prepared. Here was a bold, frank, practical talk on morality, precisely what the dissolute, unjust, and cruel governor and his companion most needed to hear. And from a prisoner, completely in the governor's power! Was ever an address less dictated by worldly prudence or better adapted to the dictates of heavenly wisdom? **Felix was terrified.** "Righteousness — and Felix was a promise-breaker, and had procured the murder of the high priest Jonathan. Self-control — and there at his side, eagerly listening, sat beautiful Drusilla. Judgment — that was the very thought that haunted Felix, only it was the judgment of his emperor, not of his God. No wonder Felix trembled. He had the soul of a slave,

26. He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul : wherefore also he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

27. But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Pôr'-çi-üş Fës'-tüs ; and desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.

says Tacitus, and the power of a sovereign." — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.* And answered, Go thy way for this time. "Go thy way." Anything to get rid of the disquieting monitor. "Go thy way" — to prison, while Felix keeps on in his way. "Go thy way" to eternal life, while the governor continues in the path to eternal death. And when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me. We do not know to what earthly end Felix came. History tells us only that when, after two more years of wicked ruling, Felix was succeeded in the governorship by Festus, the Jews in Cæsarea brought to Nero a charge against him, and it required all the influence of his powerful brother Pallas to save him from punishment. But he never found a "convenient season" for repentance and for acceptance of the one salvation for all sinners, of high rank or lowly station.

26. He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul. Felix expected a bribe from Paul to let him go. The apostle, he knew (Acts 24 : 17), had been able to raise considerable sums for the poor Christians of Jerusalem ; why not also for his own ransom ? A good proof right in the record of the governor's need of Paul's discourse on righteousness ! Wherefore also he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. He was on terms of familiar intercourse with his prisoner, and Paul had many opportunities to present the claims of Christ ; but Felix had hardened his heart, like Pharaoh.

27. But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. Festus, who died two years after Nero made him governor, was a man of far better character than his predecessor, as history tells us and as our record shows. And desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds. If Felix had removed chains from Paul, he replaced them before his departure, so that his successor might gain the impression that Paul was a dangerous prisoner. In every way Felix was eager to curry favor with the Jewish leaders, that their influence might offset the storm from the Jews of Cæsarea which he felt was soon to burst upon him. Here is another plain instance of the governor's unrighteousness.

"A CONVENIENT SEASON." "Some one has said that to-day has two great enemies — the one is yesterday, the other is to-morrow. Are we not reminded of that whenever we think of Felix, whose evil past was such a burden on him, and who talked of a convenient time — which never came?" — *Rev. George H. Morrison, D.D.*

"Felix and Drusilla did not understand that that hour when Paul stood before them was the pivotal hour upon which everything was poised, and that it tipped the wrong way." — *T. De Witt Talmage.*

"I will reform in future. But who has told me that I shall ever desire to be converted ? Do not habits become confirmed in proportion as they are indulged ? And is not an inveterate evil very difficult to cure ? If I cannot bear the excision of a slight gangrene, how shall I sustain the operation when the wound is deep ? I will reform in future ! But who has told me that I shall live to a future period ? Does not death advance every moment with gigantic strides ?" — *Jacques Savin (1677-1730).*

"Hear conscience ! What more convenient season than the present ; when you have been excited, summoned, reasoned with, will you put it off to your death bed ? Alas ! the soul has enough to do then to support the weight of a dying body. Besides, will you give the best of your time to Satan, and leave only the remnant to God ?" — *Henry Martyn, pioneer missionary to India and Persia.*

"Let no man deceive you. God is not mocked. The wages of sin are death, as Felix found too well." — *Charles Kingsley.*

The plea of procrastination, "by the very acknowledgment of him who employs it, is, emphatically, pleading guilty. For it implies the knowledge of duty, and the deliberate purpose to violate it." — *Orville Dewey.*

"Felix stands before us as a warning that a man may be convinced of his sin, and yet not converted to God." — *Archbishop Trench.*

"If you take a bit of phosphorus and put it upon a slip of wood and ignite the phosphorus, bright as the blaze is, there drops from it a white ash that coats the wood and makes it almost incombustible. And so when the flaming conviction laid upon

your hearts has burnt itself out, it has coated the heart, and it will be very difficult to kindle the light there again." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

"Men all have their warnings, and all men who perish have had a *last warning*. Perhaps this is your last warning." — *C. H. Spurgeon*.

II. PAUL BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA, Acts 25, 26. **THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR.** Governor Festus, coming from Rome, seems to have gone first to his palace in Cæsarea, and then, after only three days spent at the seat of Roman government, he went to Jerusalem, the real center of the province. At Jerusalem the implacable foes of Paul requested the governor to send for the apostle, bringing him to Jerusalem for trial. Their intention was to have a party of assassins lie in wait for Paul and murder him on the journey to Jerusalem. Whether he perceived their purpose or not, Festus merely replied that Paul had been placed by his predecessor in prison in Cæsarea, and there he should be tried. He bade influential representatives of the Sanhedrin to accompany him back to Cæsarea and there present their charges against Paul.

After ten days Festus returned to his capital, and the next day he heard Paul's accusers, who merely repeated the charges against him which they had brought before. Paul's answer again was a flat and complete denial, and a call for evidence and proof, which he well knew his accusers could not give. Festus virtually acquitted Paul of the charge of sedition, but, at the request of the Jews, suggested that Paul should go back to Jerusalem to be tried there by the Sanhedrin on the ecclesiastical charge, and the governor promised himself to be present and see that Paul received fair play. But Paul did not propose to put his head in the noose. He knew that he would hardly be allowed to reach Jerusalem alive, and that, if he did, he had no chance of a fair trial before the Sanhedrin. He therefore stood on his rights as a Roman citizen and said, "I appeal to Cæsar," that is, to the Emperor at Rome. It was Rome that had kept him in prison for two years, and Rome had no right to turn him over to another tribunal for trial. This appeal was granted, after Festus had consulted his councillors, and the men of the Sanhedrin found their prey snatched out of their hands.

THE ARRIVAL OF AGRIPPA. Paul remained in prison for a time, and while he was expecting to be sent to Rome, King Agrippa arrived to greet Festus on his entrance into his rule. This personage was Herod Agrippa II., the son of Herod Agrippa I. He was the great-grandson of Herod the Great, and Drusilla, the illegal wife of Felix, was his sister. He brought with him another sister, Bernice, whom he had sinfully made his wife. It was a double sin, for she was already married to her uncle Herod, the king of Chalcis. After this time she married Polemon, king of Cilicia, but afterwards left him and returned to her brother. Herod Agrippa II. was king of Chalcis, and later king of the region which Philip, Herod, and Lysanias had governed as tetrarchs.

Festus considered that King Agrippa would be expert in Jewish affairs, and took an early opportunity to lay before him the puzzling case of Paul, giving him a fair synopsis of the matter. "Now," said Festus, "I am obliged to send this prisoner to Rome, and I do not know which charge to send with him. Perhaps you can help me here." Agrippa's curiosity was piqued, and the audience room was gorgeously arrayed, for the king was fond of pomp and ceremony. In dazzling robes the monarch sat on a sumptuous throne, Bernice by his side with Festus. It was a striking contrast when Paul, clanking his chains, was led into the scene of splendor. To the worldly eye he was only a miserable prisoner, a wretched little Jew; but to a discerning spectator he appeared to be the only king, in the hall, a man of towering intellect and masterful spirit. Indeed, Festus and Agrippa and Bernice are only known to-day because that prisoner stood before them for half an hour.

PAUL'S ADDRESS BEFORE AGRIPPA. Paul, who had scorned to imitate Tertullus and flatter Felix, was able honestly to compliment Agrippa in the opening of his address, for he knew that the king, because of his kinship with the Jews, would understand the situation far better than Lysias, Felix, or Festus, and Paul felt happy in appearing before him. To Agrippa he could and did speak of his education as a strict Pharisee, and of the Messianic hopes of the Israelites which were fulfilled in Jesus and evidenced by his resurrection. Then the apostle told once more the appealing story of his own conversion from Paul the persecutor to Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ, sent especially to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. All of this could be proved by the testimony of numerous witnesses, as Agrippa would be quick to perceive. Paul's startling conversion will always be an unanswerable proof of Christianity.

ACTS 26 : 19. Wherefore, O king *Ä-gríp'-pá*, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision :

20. But declared both to them of *Dă-mäs'-cüs* first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.

21. For this cause the Jews seized me in the temple, and assayed to kill me.

22. Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come ;

23. How that the Christ must suffer, *and* how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.

24. And as he thus made his defence, *Fës'-tüs* saith with a loud voice, Paul, thou art mad ; thy much learning is turning thee mad.

19. Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Paul had been disobedient to his conscience, and had been "kicking against the pricks," but seeing and hearing the risen Lord was something he could not resist.

20. But declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles. Luke gives an account, in the Acts, of Paul's preaching in Damascus, in Jerusalem, and to the Gentiles of many lands ; but when did he preach in Judæa ? It is probable that Cilicia, Paul's homeland where he certainly preached, was at this time a part of Judæa, and that is why Felix (Acts 23 : 34, 35) was so ready to hear his case. **That they should repent and turn to God.** This call to repentance and requirement of conversion must be the beginning of all preaching. Men cannot know God until they turn to him, and they cannot turn to him except by turning away from their sins. **Doing works worthy of repentance.** Repentance must be matched by a godly life ; its worth must be proved by Christlike deeds and words.

21. For this cause the Jews seized me in the temple, and assayed to kill me. The first cause of their hostility was the preaching of Christ at all, for the Jews had slain him, and what was their guilt and shame if he were proved to be their Messiah ; and the second cause was that Christ was preached to the hated Gentiles, who were admitted to the church of the Messiah on an equality with Jews.

22. Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day. "Therefore" calls attention to the violence of the attacks made upon Paul, the venom of his enemies, the variety and viciousness of their assaults, and their long continuance now for many years and in many lands : no aid except that of God could have preserved Paul to that day. The apostle had many friends, but they would have been powerless to save him without God's help. **Testifying both to small and great.** God had told Paul that he was to preach Christ before kings (Acts 9 : 15), and here the prophecy was being fulfilled ; but the apostle was just as ready to preach to the little handful of women at Philippi. **Saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come.** "Moses" means the Pentateuch and "the prophets" all the rest of the Old Testament, for the historical books were counted by the Jews as prophetic. In preaching Jesus as the Christ Paul had had no book of the New Testament to guide him, and found a sufficiency of Christian truth in the Old Testament.

23. How that the Christ must suffer. Paul did not need to go beyond Isa. 52 : 13—53 : 12 for this. **And how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.** Luke had perhaps already written his Gospel, in which he had written the prophecy of Simeon concerning Christ, using these same words from Isa. 42 : 6 ; 49 : 6. "First" refers to the fact that our Lord was "the first-fruits of them that are asleep" (1 Cor. 15 : 20).

24. And as he thus made his defence, Festus saith with a loud voice. By his loud tones the governor signified both his interest and his excitement ; also his amazement at Paul's words concerning a resurrection from the dead, and his absolute

25. But Paul saith, I am not mad, most excellent Fēs'-tūs; but speak forth words of truth and soberness.

26. For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner.

27. King Ā-grip'-pā, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28. And Ā-grip'pā said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.

29. And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds.

denial of the possibility of such a thing. The blessed truth has become so familiar to us that we cannot realize what utter nonsense it seemed to those — especially the heathen idolaters — who heard it for the first time. **Paul, thou art mad; thy much learning is turning thee mad.** In Athens, when Paul on Mars' Hill preached the doctrine of the resurrection, his cultivated audience mocked at him, though some of them wished to hear more of the marvellously comforting but unbelievable teaching (Acts 17: 32). In Jerusalem, when Christ declared that he had power to lay down his life and take it again, many of the learned Jews who heard him declared that he was mad (John 10: 18-20). "Much learning" is an allusion, probably, to Paul's address, — of which, we must remember, we have only a brief synopsis, — in the course of which the apostle doubtless quoted much from the Jewish Scriptures, displaying a profound knowledge of them which Agrippa, at least, could appreciate. We must remember that Paul had been educated as a Jewish rabbi and had risen to membership in the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Senate.

25. **But Paul saith, I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but speak forth words of truth and soberness.** Paul, though charged with being crazy (literally, with having his head turned), gives a perfectly courteous reply. Though his words about Christ's resurrection might seem to be bold lies, they were the sober truth.

26. **For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely.** And Paul went on to speak even more freely (verse 27). The speaker is too delicate to state how Agrippa came to have so close an acquaintance with the facts, namely, through his father's killing James and imprisoning Peter. **For I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner.** The writer of the Acts says in his Gospel (Luke 7: 17) that the fame of Christ's miracles went out through Judæa "and all the region round about"; and when Jesus was sent for trial to Herod Antipas, the great-uncle of this Agrippa, that Tetrarch of Galilee was glad because he had long wished to see him and hoped that he would perform some miracle in his presence (Luke 23: 7, 8).

27. **King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.** Agrippa had been educated in heathen Rome, but he was a Jewish king, and he must have believed in the great religious teachers of his race; thus believing, he must recognize that everything Paul had said about Jesus was in exact harmony with what they had foretold concerning the Messiah.

28. **And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.** There are still some scholars that allow the old translation, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," but they are very few. The Greek (*ἐν ὀλίγῳ*) means probably "with little speech," but no noun is expressed and the phrase is vague. The king probably spoke sneeringly: "Do you expect, with a few sentences, to add me — *me*, a king — to the company of the despised and obscure followers of the Nazarene, dubbed 'Christians'?"

29. **And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds.** Paul may have been relieved from chains in prison, but on this occasion he was certainly fettered, and perhaps he suffered all the time from this burden and indignity. Paul stood there a free man in Christ Jesus. And he well might wish that Agrippa stood in the same liberty instead of being the slave of sin. The apostle refrains from using the mocking word, "Christian," but he would have been willing

to use all persuasion, and spend indefinite time and strength, if he could win a single soul of those before him for the salvation in which he himself rejoiced.

With this impassioned utterance the hearing closed, and Festus with his guests withdrew to talk the matter over. They agreed that Paul had done nothing deserving imprisonment, still less death, and that he might have been freed if his appeal to the Emperor had not taken the case out of the jurisdiction of Festus. That appeal, however, was providential, for it brought Paul to Rome, where he had longed to go, and brought him there in such a way as to give him a chance to speak for Christ before the sovereign of the Roman Empire himself. For that opportunity Paul would have been glad to lie in prison even longer than two years.

OBEYING THE HEAVENLY VISION. "The ends for which all men live are visions. Paul stands preëminent among men of vision, because his vision was heavenly and because of his unswerving and passionate pursuit of it to the last breath of life." — *Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D.*

"Visions are not ended. The biographies of eminent Christians are full of testimonials of hours of luminousness." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

"Every Hamlet knows at last the sorrow with which poor Coleridge once said : 'I am Hamlet ; whenever a new duty is presented to me my first impulse is to shrink from the performance of it.' Paul never lost his vision by his action." — *Frank W. Gunsaulus.*

"Obedience is needed to keep the force of the vision unimpaired. And conversely, the vision is needed to quicken and direct the obedience." — *Rev. H. G. Woods, D.D.*

"It is good to remember God's grace in the past, and to recall his promises for the future, but it is better to have some clear vision at the hour. As Constantine saw the cross on the field of battle, so we should see our spiritual help and backing at the time of our practical need." — *Rev. John Kelman, D.D.*

"When Nelson was about eighteen years old he was greatly depressed by the fear that he could never rise in his profession. 'My mind was staggered,' he wrote, years afterwards, 'with a view of the difficulties I had to surmount, and the little interest I possessed. I could discover no means of reaching the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within me, and presented my king and my country as my patron. 'Well, then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero ! and, confiding in Providence, brave every danger.' " Long afterwards Nelson loved to speak of the feelings of that moment ; and from that time, he often said, a radiant orb was suspended in his mind's eye, which urged him onward to renown." — *Canon M. G. Glazebrook.*

LESSON X (24). — December 9.

PAUL GOES TO ROME. — Acts 27 : 1—28 : 31 ; Romans 1 : 8-15 ;
Philippians 1 : 12-14.

PRINT Acts 28 : 11-24, 30, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I am not ashamed of the gospel : for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* — ROM. 1 : 16.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 91 : 9-16.

Primary Topic : PAUL AND A STORM AT SEA.

Lesson Material : Acts 27 : 1—28 : 31. Print Acts 27 : 1, 2, 9-11, 18-26.

Memory Verse : I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest.
Gen. 28 : 15 a.

Junior Topic : PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME.

Lesson Material : Acts 27 : 1—28 : 31. Print Acts 27 : 1, 2, 9-11, 18-26.

Memory Verse : Be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me. Acts 27 : 25.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL MAKES THE MOST OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

Topic for Young People and Adults : DIVINE LEADERSHIP IN PAUL'S LIFE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes will have for their lesson the account of Paul's experiences at sea, especially in the great storm, emphasizing Paul's heroism and his reliance on God. Show the pupils that prayer was the source of Paul's bravery, and that the same resource is open to them. Use the map and make the course of the journey very clear.

The Older Classes will find this a lesson in providential leadings. Trace them in Paul's journey and imprisonment, and discuss the ways of Providence in the lives of modern Christians. A careful study of the Rome of Paul's day will add to the value of the lesson, and some teacher of ancient history may be called in to speak on this topic.

Question Suggested for Discussion: If Paul accomplished so much for Christ in his prison, what should we do with our liberty?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The voyage to Malta, September, A.D. 59. Malta to Rome, spring of A.D. 60. Paul's first Roman imprisonment, A.D. 60-61.

Place. — Malta and Rome.

THE ROUND TABLE.**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Sea travel in Paul's day.
Ships of Paul's time.
Paul's mastery of men.
The island of Malta.
Rome in Paul's time.
The Emperor Nero.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT: Divine Leadership in Paul's Life.**

- I. PAUL LONGS FOR ROME, Rom. 1: 8-15.
- II. PAUL, LEADING AND LED, Acts 27: 1-28: 10.
Caught in a great storm.
Shipwrecked on the coast of Malta.
Kindly received in Malta.
- III. PAUL PREACHES IN ROME, Acts 28: 11-31; Phil. 1: 12-14.
The voyage to Italy.
The journey to Rome.
Paul meets the Jews of Rome.
Paul's two years in Rome.
The Christian's life a plan of God.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hayes's *Paul and His Epistles*. Speer's *The Man Paul*. Milligan in *Men of the New Testament*. Smith's *The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*. Volumes on St. Paul in Rome by Forbes, Merivale, Butler. Hoyt's *Gleams from Paul's Prison*.

I. PAUL LONGS FOR ROME, Rom. 1: 8-15. "Paul was no Galilean peasant but a citizen of the Roman empire. His outlook always was imperial. No other disciple or apostle at the time of his call had such a wide field opened before him. He set out to be a world conqueror. He took the world for his parish from the very beginning. He was a little man with a great soul, like John Wesley. He never was satisfied with the territories traversed or the work already done. He always planned wider itineraries and greater things. He was the incarnation of enterprise. He had a boundless ambition. His plans always outran his possibilities. He dreamed of a kingdom, world-wide and eternal. No other apostle had such an imperial programme. No other apostle did so much to realize such a programme. It was his imperialism which made Paul the greatest missionary the Christian church has produced." — *Prof. D. A. Hayes*.

Now Rome was the world, in Paul's day. No other city before or since has gathered up to itself so many reins of power and influence reaching out over the world. Therefore Paul's thoughts, during all the early years of his missionary work, turned ever more eagerly to Rome. He labored in Damascus, Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth, all great cities, but he ever looked forward to a greater, to the greatest.

When at Corinth he was at his nearest point to Rome, and wrote to the Christians of the metropolis the Epistle which most Christians regard as the supreme writing from his pen. In it he shows how eagerly he had captured every bit of news which reached him from the Roman church, how he rejoiced in every evidence of the faith of the Roman Christians, how he longed to see them, and how he prayed for them constantly, asking that it might be God's will that he should go to them. He tells them that he had often laid plans to go to Rome, but the way had been closed by God's providence which Paul was always so quick to recognize.

The reason which Paul gives for this great longing to go to Rome is a very noble one. He felt that he was in debt to all men, "both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and the foolish," and the debt which he owed them was his knowledge of Christ and his freely offered salvation. He could not rest in peace until, as far as was humanly possible, he had paid the debt.

"IN DEBT TO ALL MEN." "It is no exaggeration to say that it is to St. Paul — always, of course, as the agent, the instrument of his heavenly Lord — that we owe

the Christian church as we find it in the world to-day. He first transformed it from being a mere Jewish sect into a world-embracing society ; he first grasped and boldly proclaimed the universality of the gospel, and the freedom of the faith ; he first broke down the barriers between Jew and Greek, between bond and free, and taught that all are 'one man in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3 : 28)."— *Prof. George Milligan.*

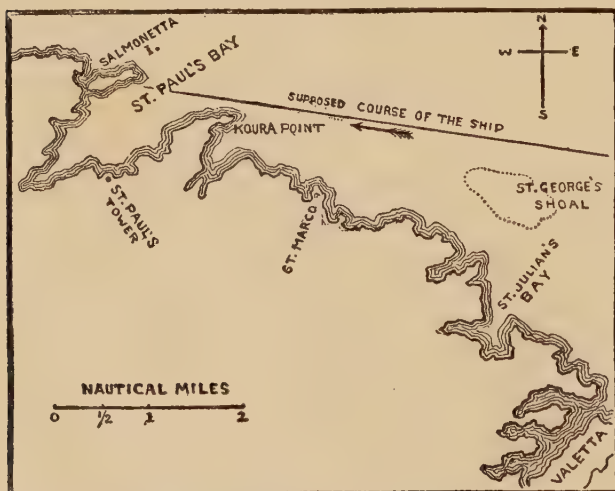
II. PAUL, LEADING AND LED, Acts 27 : 1-28 : 10. **CAUGHT IN A GREAT STORM.** When there was an opportunity to put a party of prisoners on board a ship, Paul was one of the number. The Roman soldier in charge of the prisoners was a centurion, or captain in charge of a hundred soldiers, named Julius, who was of the Augustan cohort or regiment. The ship was not bound for Italy, but was going to a seaport on the coast of Asia Minor, where Julius might find a ship bound for Italy. We see how uncertain and cumbersome was travel in those days.

They sailed north to Sidon in Phœnicia, where Julius courteously allowed Paul to call on his Christian friends. Leaving Sidon, the ship encountered a wind from the west, and to avoid it as much as possible sailed between the large island of Cyprus and the mainland until they reached Myra in Lycia near the southwestern corner of Asia Minor. At Myra Julius found a vessel from Alexandria in Egypt, which may have been blown thus far out of its course by the same west wind which Paul's ship had been facing. The ship, however, was bound for Italy, so that Julius and his prisoners took passage on it.

Held back by this head-wind, the ship crept westward for many days, and at the end of that time had only reached Cnidus, at the extreme southwestern tip of Asia Minor. At Cnidus the ship could not launch out into the open sea in the face of the wind, and so was obliged to turn to the south, across the wind to the eastward of the large island of Crete. Sheltered by this island, the ship sailed along its southern coast till it reached a port called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea, whose ruins have been identified. Fair Havens — mentioned nowhere else in literature — still exists and bears its ancient name as a mute witness to Luke's accuracy.

In these olden days men did not attempt to navigate except during the fair-weather portion of the year, which was a very serious restriction of travel. Paul's

ship tarried a long time at Fair Havens waiting for the wind to change or die down, and during the wait the Day of Atonement passed, which fell near the end of September, when the season of winter storms was about to begin. Paul was an experienced traveller, and, as we know from 2 Cor. 11 : 25, written long before this time, he had been shipwrecked three times, and on one occasion he had spent twenty-four hours in the deep with only a plank between him and death.



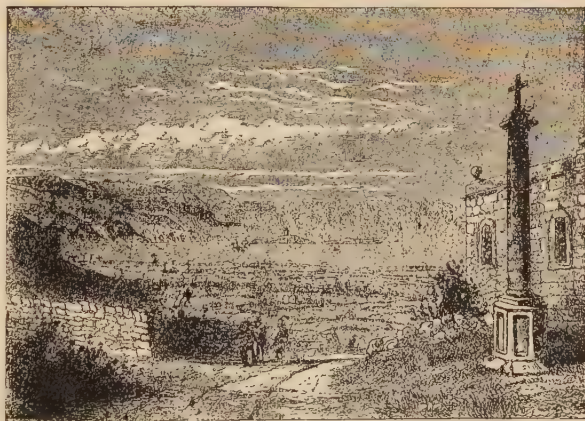
By this time he was on friendly terms with the centurion, the sailing master, and the owner of the ship and cargo, all of whom had come to see his eminent qualities, so that he went to them and gave his advice that the ship should proceed no farther, for any such attempt would probably result in the loss of the ship and cargo, and doubtless also the loss of all on board. In the face of this advice, however, the decision was to leave Fair Havens, where the harbor was poor, and creep along the southern shore of Crete westwardly to the port of Phenice (modern Lutro), whose harbor is open toward the east and therefore protected from the fierce wind which was blowing from the west or northwest.

SHIPWRECKED ON THE COAST OF MALTA. During this debate the wind changed, and blew softly from the south. Greatly cheered, they set sail and moved cautiously along the southern coast of Crete, proceeding westward. But before long one of the sudden changes of wind characteristic of the Mediterranean took place, and instead of blowing from the south a north wind (called Euraquilo) came rushing down from the mountains in the center of the island, and drove the ship southward to the little island of Cauda. In the lee of Cauda they halted in order to haul on board the small boat, which was towed behind according to custom. It was full of water, and they had much difficulty in hoisting it. Also they used the opportunity to pass stout cables under and over the ship to hold its planks together, for there was great danger that the pounding of the waves would open the seams, when the sea would rush in. Also, as the north wind was so powerful and would drive them upon the perilous sandy bars north of Africa, all the gear that they could spare and still navigate the ship was lowered from the masts, so that they proceeded as slowly as possible.

But the storm increased in violence so that it was next necessary to throw overboard some of the cargo, which was probably Egyptian wheat intended for Rome. It was very heavy, and getting rid of some of it would enable the ship to ride the waves much more easily. On the third day the condition of the ship was still more perilous, and they threw out everything portable on which they could lay their hands, completely stripping the deck and hull. The sky was obscured with the flying spray and the dense clouds, and for many days they got no glimpse of stars or sun from which to learn where they were. Moreover, in the excitement and turmoil there was no chance to prepare food, and every one on board was gaunt and famished.

Then Paul stood forth in the midst of the despairing company, and reminded them of his advice given at Fair Havens, and there rejected. It is generally unwise to say, "I told you so," but this time it was wise, for Paul wished to gain an attentive hearing for his new advice. He had a message of good cheer for them: the ship, indeed, would be lost, but all lives would be preserved. That happy message came to him from an angel of his God, the God "whose I am and whom I serve," in the apostle's eloquent words. The heavenly messenger stood by Paul as he slept the night before, told him that he was to stand before the Emperor in Rome, and that in answer to his prayer God had granted him the lives of all his fellow passengers. "I believe God," said Paul emphatically, "and I know that everything will happen according to his word."

"WHOSE I AM AND WHOM I SERVE." "To the mastery of Christ Paul had fully surrendered, yielding to his personality, a personality so intense, so vivid, as to excite the most ardent affection, for 'never man,' as one has said, 'loved Christ with so absorbing a passion as did Paul.' His love for Christ is indeed without a parallel in the history of religious emotions. He never lost the vision of Him whom he saw but once, on the way to Damascus. Dedicating his whole being to the Christ 'who had loved him and given himself for him,' he had no thought but to please Christ, no aim but to advance his glory. This is the secret of all great life. 'It is only,' said Phillips Brooks, 'in personal love and loyalty that life completes itself.'" — *Robert E. Speer.*



St. Paul's Bay, Malta, from the South.

Lowin.

In the center is the island of Salmonetta, with a lighthouse upon it. At the west end of the island, between it and the point off shore, is the place where the two seas met. The ship marks the spot where the wreck occurred. The rocky cape, Koura, where the sailors first heard the surf, lies further east beyond the building shown in the picture.

TOSSED ABOUT IN THE SEA. Paul's prophecy was soon fulfilled. It was the fourteenth night from Fair Havens, the ship all that time having been beaten back and forth in the Sea of Adria. This extensive portion of the Mediterranean lay between Italy and Greece and northern Africa; the modern Adriatic Sea is only a small part of it. About midnight the sailors perceived signs of land, and on sounding, discovered that the water was shoaling so fast that they would soon be on shore. Therefore they cast four anchors out of the stern, that the ship might not drift on the rocks, and in great anxiety prayed for daybreak. At last the sailors let down the small boat from the bow, as if intending to anchor the ship at that end also in order to keep it from sweeping around, though their real object was selfishly to escape to land, abandoning the ship and its passengers. Paul perceived their intention, and told the centurion, who promptly ordered the boat's ropes cut and let it drift ashore. It would be sorely needed on the morrow, but the sailors would be needed more, to manage the ship.

Again Paul the prisoner came to the front in that distracted ship. For fourteen days the passengers and crew had taken no regular meals, "only snatching a morsel now and then when they were able, and that of something which had not been prepared." — *Lumby*. This was destructive of their *morale*, and with their weakened bodies they were in poor shape for the struggle with the waves which Paul foresaw on the morrow. Therefore the apostle got them all to partake of a good meal, assuring them that every one of them would come off alive. Paul opened the meal with a blessing address to his God, which in itself was a brave act in the presence of all those idolaters. After they had all eaten — Luke here states that the total number on board was 276 persons — they were all more cheerful, and proceeded to lighten the ship as much as possible by casting into the sea all the rest of its precious cargo of wheat so that it might ride through as shallow water as possible before grounding, when they would have the shortest distance to swim or float to shore.

The dawn of day disclosed a land unfamiliar to all on board. It proved to be the island of Malta, and so graphic is Luke's description that the exact location of the shipwreck has undoubtedly been found, in the portion of the coast known as St. Paul's Bay. The anchors were pulled up and the mainsail was set, so that the wind might drive the ship well up to the shore. Then the ship stuck fast, and at once the pounding waves began to break it up at the stern. Paul here encountered the most terrible danger of the voyage, for the soldiers proposed to kill all the prisoners, since if any of them should escape their own lives would be forfeited according to the stern Roman law. But the centurion had come to admire Paul, and doubtless felt that

all would have been lost if it had not been for the apostle, so he vetoed the soldiers' plans. Then all that could swim were ordered to fling themselves into the boiling waters and make what progress they could to shore, while the rest entrusted themselves to floating planks and spars from the stern of the ship which was breaking up. So they did, and each must have encountered many difficulties, but finally all reached land in safety, as Paul had foretold.

KINDLY RECEIVED IN MALTA. The land on which they were wrecked was found to be the island of Melita, modern Malta, south of the large island of Sicily. The inhabitants of the island are called "barbarians" because they spoke a strange tongue, probably a Phœnician dialect, as the island was settled from Carthage in north Africa; but it was a civilized region, affording all comforts to the refugees, and among the "barbarians" would soon be found



From an ancient ivory diptych brought from Rome.
St. Paul Shaking the Viper from His Hand into the Burning Sticks.

some who could speak Greek or Latin, as the island was, of course, under Roman rule.

It was cold and raining, and a fire was the first requisite, so drift wood was gathered, and soon a blazing fire was drying their soaked garments. Paul was making himself

11. And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers.

12. And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13. And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhē'-gŭm: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Pū-tē'-ŭ-li;

14. Where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome.

15. And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Āp'-pī-ŭs and The Three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

busy carrying sticks to the fire when a poisonous snake, a viper, came out of the sticks and fastened on his hand; but he calmly shook it off into the fire. At first the islanders, looking upon him horrified, whispered among themselves that he must be a murderer whose punishment had followed him in that awful fashion. They expected him to swell up and drop down dead; but when he was plainly unharmed, they changed their minds and said that he must be a god! Such is the sublime logic of superstition.

Near the scene of the shipwreck was the headquarters of the governor of the island named Publius. He received Paul and his companions and for three days gave them hospitable entertainment. The father of Publius was sick — Dr. Luke said he had fever and dysentery — and Paul prayed by his bedside and obtained his recovery. Afterwards other sick of the island came and were miraculously healed, in their gratitude heaping upon Paul and all the ship's large company many honors and gifts of necessities for their further voyage. Of Publius it is the tradition that he was won to Christianity and became the bishop of Malta. Paul was never idle when he had a chance for missionary evangelism.

III. PAUL PREACHES IN ROME, Acts 28:11-31; Phil. 1:12-14. THE VOYAGE TO ITALY. 11. And after three months we set sail. Note that we are again in one of the "we" passages of the Acts, indicating that Luke was of the party, ministering to Paul as his physician. In a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers. Its Greek name was *Dioscuri*, that is, Castor and Pollux, Jupiter's two sons born of Leda. They became the two twin stars of those names, stars said to be of especially good omen to sailors. The "sign" was the ship's figurehead, which was often at the stern as well as the bow. This was probably another grain ship from Egypt such as was beaten to pieces in the bay three months before.

12. And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. Syracuse was an important city on the southeast of Sicily, directly north from Malta. It was historically famous as the scene of many misfortunes of the Athenian fleet and army as they attacked Sicily during the Peloponnesian war.

13. And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium. Rhegium (the modern Reggio) is at the extreme tip of the "toe" of Italy. As the wind from the south failed them, they had to tack, reaching Rhegium by a twisting route. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. The south wind was what they had been waiting for; it carried them straight northward without further tacking. Puteoli (the modern Pozzuoli, near Naples) was then Rome's chief seaport. Here Paul and the other prisoners, with the soldiers, came on shore.

14. Where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome. "Strangers of Rome" were in Jerusalem at the first Pentecost (Acts 2:10), and already, less than three decades after the death of Christ, there was evidently a considerable body of Christians in the world's metropolis and even in this seaport town.

15. And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns. These two towns were situated on the famous Appian Way, named from Appius Claudius, the Censor. It stretched from Rome to Brundisium and is still of the greatest interest to travellers, but chiefly because in walking along it we know that we are travelling in the footsteps

16. And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

17. And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans:

of Paul. The Market of Appius was about forty miles from Rome and The Three Taverns about ten miles further on. While Paul tarried the seven days at Puteoli word of his arrival easily reached Rome, as there was constant travel back and forth. Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. He was a prisoner, and

probably was downcast because he did not see how he could preach Christ from a prison cell. But the way was opening out before him, as it always did. His audiences were coming to him, if he could not go to them, and his quick mind at once saw how speedily the words of life would radiate forth even from a prison.

16. And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him. The statement that the centurion delivered his prisoners to the captain of the guard, the *præfectus prætorio*, whose business it was to take charge of the prisoners whose cases the Emperor himself was to hear, is omitted from the American revision because not found in the oldest manuscripts; nevertheless it looks most authentic, and scholars are inclined to accept it. The centurion Julius probably



Rome. Arch of Drusus.

From a photograph.

Paul, chained to a soldier, must have passed through this arch.

obtained for Paul the favor of living by himself, which would vastly facilitate his work as an evangelist. He had learned that Paul was a very noble and extraordinary man, and the soldiers that were with him on the ship would have much to say about Paul's masterful characteristics. Paul must spend his days chained by the hand to his guard, which was a bitter indignity, but he felt himself to be the Lord's prisoner, and gloried in his bonds, as he often wrote. Moreover, as the guards were often changed, he thus got at a large number of men with the gospel and with glorious results. Thus all Paul's misfortunes turned out for the progress of Christianity, and he rejoiced.

17. And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews. Paul spent three days in greeting the Roman Christians, and learning the state of the church there, before he reached out after the Jews who were not Christians. Notwithstanding all his bitter experiences with the Jews, he still

18. Who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me.

19. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation.

20. For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21. And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judæa concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee.

22. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against.

23. And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded *the matter*, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening.

felt it best to begin his work in a new place with them, for though he might win only two or three, those would be the two or three best fitted to receive and propagate Christianity. The Emperor Claudius had banished all the Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2), but Nero evidently allowed many of them to return. As his quarters were limited, Paul invited to this first meeting only the most influential of the Jews. And when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Paul implies that the Jews of Jerusalem had handed him over to the Romans, which was indirectly the case, since the Romans seized him to protect him from the violence of a Jewish mob. Paul was always scrupulous to observe Jewish customs and rites, and insisted upon them with all Jews, his only offence being that he did not insist upon circumcision when Gentiles joined — not the Jewish church, but the Christian.

18. Who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. Felix would have freed him if he had been bribed, for he knew he was innocent. Festus declared that he was guiltless, and so did Agrippa.

19. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar. Paul tactfully says nothing about the Jews' urgency that he should be brought to Jerusalem to be tried there and his certainty that they wished to get him into their hands and kill him. He was as lenient toward his fellow countrymen as he could be. Not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation. Paul did not intend to appeal to Cæsar against the Jews, for he knew how bitter the Emperor was against them already and he was far too patriotic to think of bringing further trouble upon them, no matter what they did or planned to do to himself.

20. For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. Paul's audience would at once understand him to mean by "the hope of Israel" the long-expected Messiah, and they knew enough about Christianity to know that he believed that this Messiah had appeared in the person of the crucified Jesus.

21. And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judæa concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. Paul himself, as we have seen, got to Rome as speedily as any letter or any man could have gone. Besides, Rome was a good place for a Jew of Jerusalem to keep away from in the existing state of Roman feeling against Jews, and an appeal by letter also might easily get Jerusalem into trouble with the imperial authorities. Paul knew all this, of course, when he got his trial removed to Rome.

22. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against. Christianity was known everywhere by this time; it was turning the world upside down. During the previous decade word concerning it would be sure to spread among the Jews especially, and with them it would hardly be a favorable word.

23. And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number. Only the leading men came to the first conference, but for the

24. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

30. And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him,

31. Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

second a general invitation was issued. **To whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God.** "The kingdom of God" was a common phrase signifying the reign of the promised Messiah. This kingdom, Paul said, has been inaugurated and is now spreading over the earth. Become a citizen of it! That was the opening message of Jesus: "The kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). **And persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets.** He quoted the Mosaic prophecies concerning Christ, and those in such prophets as Isaiah, showing how they applied perfectly to the life of Jesus. **From morning till evening.** No twenty-minute sermons in those days! This was known to be a matter of the greatest moment, of infinite issues. Is it less to us now? And yet how many would spend an entire day over it?

24. **And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.** The Pharisees would be inclined to believe the story of Christ's resurrection, which Paul always emphasized and built upon, and the Sadducees would disbelieve it. So always, when Christ is preached, some may be expected to reject the good news and some to accept it.

So the Jews left Paul, but not till the apostle had hurled after them the keen condemnation of Isa. 6:9, a sentence which the Saviour himself had used against them. "Now," said Paul in effect, "I have completed here in Rome, at the center of the world, my message to the Jews, and they have finally and decisively rejected it. From henceforth I am free to carry the good news of salvation to the Gentiles, and they will hear and accept."

30. **And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling.** Paul's friends must have provided the money for hiring the house, for the apostle could no longer support himself by his trade of tent-making. **And received all that went in unto him.** He could not go to them, but every one came to know what a warm welcome awaited him there, and one caller would bring another. This is essentially the mode adopted by modern missionaries in beginning work in a foreign land.

31. **Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.** These two phases of Paul's preaching were closely connected, for the Lord Jesus Christ made possible the kingdom of God by his coming to earth, his life, death, and resurrection. **With all boldness, none forbidding him.** Here we see how providential was Paul's imprisonment, for what his jailers allowed no one could forbid. If he had been a free man preaching and teaching in Rome, his enemies might easily have framed a false charge against him.

PAUL PREACHING IN PRISON (Phil. 1:12-14). During these two years' imprisonment in Rome Paul wrote four Epistles which have been preserved, those to the Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. The letter to the Philippians was written to acknowledge a generous gift which that church had sent the apostle. In the course of the letter Paul says that his imprisonment has really resulted in promoting Christianity in Rome, for through his jailers Paul's influence has reached throughout the whole Prætorian Guard, and the Christians of Rome have become very bold in proclaiming the blessed truths of the new religion. The Prætorian Guard was the life-guard of the Emperor himself, and as one soldier after another was detailed to guard Paul, his influence spread far and wide and extended to very influential quarters.

LESSON XI (25). — December 16.

PAUL AND HIS FRIENDS. — Acts 20:36-38; Romans 16:1-4; Philippians 2:25-30; Philemon.

PRINT Philemon 8-21.

GOLDEN TEXT — *A friend loveth at all times.* — PROV. 17:17.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 63 : 1-7.

Primary Topic : PAUL WRITES A LETTER TO PHILEMON.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 16 : 1-4 ; Phil. 2 : 25-30 ; Philem. Print Philem. 1-7, 21.

Memory Verse : Let us work that which is good toward all men. Gal. 6 : 10.

Junior Topic : PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON.

Lesson Material : Acts 20 : 36-38 ; Rom. 16 : 1-4 ; Phil. 2 : 25-30 ; Philem. Print Philem. 1-7, 21.

Memory Verse : Gal. 6 : 10.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : PAUL AS A FRIEND.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE PLACE OF FRIENDSHIP IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes should be told something about slavery in Paul's day, and of how Christianity put into the world the spirit of love which abolished slavery. Tell the moving story of the runaway slave and of how Paul sent him back to his master with one of the most beautiful letters ever written.

The Older Classes will do at least three things in this lesson : (1) study the number and variety of Paul's friends, as an indication of the richness of the apostle's nature ; (2) study the Epistle to Philemon as a wonderful picture of ideal friendship ; (3) study the nature of true friendship and the part it should play in a Christian's life and in the church at large.

Question Suggested for Discussion : Do the conditions of modern life tend to promote or prevent friendships ?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Garvie's *Studies of Paul and His Gospel*. Dudley's *St. Paul's Friendships and His Friends*. Parker's *Epistles to Colossians, Philemon, and Thessalonians*. Burrell's *Paul's Companions*. Adeney in *Women of the Bible*. Jefferson's *The Character of Paul*. Trumbull's *Friendship the Master-Passion*. Iverach's *St. Paul, His Life and Times*. Moule on Philemon in *The Cambridge Bible*. Farrar's powerful story, *Darkness and Dawn*, is the imaginary history of Philemon.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul sends Philemon to Colossæ near the end of his first imprisonment, A.D. 62.

Place. — Rome.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul as a letter-writer.
Paul's genius for friendship.
Paul's friends.
Slavery in Paul's day.
The attitude of Christianity toward slavery.
The Epistle to Philemon as a disclosure of Paul's character.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul as a Friend.

I. SOME OF PAUL'S MANY FRIENDS.

The Ephesian elders, Acts 20 : 36-38.
Phoebe, Priscilla, Aquila, Rom. 16 : 1-4.
Epaphroditus, Phil. 2 : 25-30.
Other friends of Paul.

II. PAUL'S SLAVE FRIEND, ONESIMUS, Philem. 1-16.

Paul the aged.
A brother beloved.

III. PAUL'S FRIEND PHILEMON, Philem. 17-25.

Paul counted a partner.
"Let me have joy of thee."
Friendship in the Christian life.

I. SOME OF PAUL'S MANY FRIENDS. "Paul could not have done his work without the love of his friends. They were indispensable supports of his soul. He could not bear to be alone. When a friend forsook him, the world became dark. He yearned constantly for human approbation, human appreciation, human sympathy and affection. When he is absent from his friends, he thinks of them, prays for them every day, mentions them by name in his prayers, meditates upon their spiritual progress, rejoices in their moral victories, looks forward with eagerness to hearing from them again. He was always thanking God for his friends, praising them, pouring out his love on them." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

THE EPHESIAN ELDERS, Acts 20 : 36-38. We have already seen (lesson for October 28) how Paul, on his last journey to Jerusalem, stopped at Miletus, and, not having time to visit his beloved church at Ephesus where he had labored for three years, sent for the elders of that church to come to him at Miletus. When they arrived, "he spake to them in the most touching way. It is one of the most pathetic speeches in all literature, and it is marked throughout with phrases characteristically Pauline. Other speeches given by Luke may be a report in his own words ; this speech seems to be in the very words used by Paul." — *Prof. James Iverach*. The

farewell scene — Paul's prayer for them as they all knelt, their weeping, their embracing Paul and kissing him and sorrowing because they were not to see him again — is one of the most expressive pictures of Christian friendship in all the books ever written.

PHŒBE, PRISCILLA, AQUILA, Rom. 16 : 1-4. The last chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans is crowded with salutations to the Christians in Rome, named and characterized most affectionately, and particularized in a way to show how much each of them meant to the apostle. Twenty-two persons are named in ten verses, besides affectionate references to households and relatives. During Paul's twenty years of labor in many lands he had won to Christ many who had afterwards removed to the great city which was the center of gravity of the world, and in view of the journey thither which he was planning he wished to make the most of those points of contact.

But before beginning his salutations, Paul commends to the Roman Christians a noble woman of Cenchreæ, near Corinth where the letter was written. Her name was Phœbe, and she probably was the bearer of the priceless Epistle to Rome. Paul's picture of her represents her as devoted to the helping of Christians, and she had bestowed some notable service on the apostle, perhaps caring for him in a severe sickness. In return Paul asked the Roman Christians to assist her in the business which took her to Rome.

Following this commendation of Phœbe Paul sends greetings to Aquila and his wife Priscilla (or in shortened form Prisca). These two, driven from Rome in the exile of Jews by Claudius, went to Corinth where Aquila worked as a tentmaker and had Paul, who was of the same trade, as his lodger. They went with Paul to Ephesus and entered Christian work there, even instructing more completely in Christianity the eloquent Apollos. From Ephesus they apparently returned to Rome. "No other married couple in the Bible appears in such complete, all-round association. We rarely see so rich an instance of true marriage as this union in heart and aim, in life and work. They had risked their lives to save the apostle's life — when and under what circumstances we do not know. Possibly it was during the riot at Ephesus. Thus we see that they had the true ring of Christ's heroes, the genuine martyr spirit; they were ready to take up the cross. At the same time they showed the spirit of stanch friendship. They were willing to die for Paul. But then Paul was worth dying for." — *Principal Walter F. Adeney*.

EPAPHRODITUS, Phil. 2 : 25-30. Epaphroditus was probably a native of Philippi in Macedonia, the first city of Europe visited by Paul, and very likely Paul won him to Christ at that time. He was sent by the Philippians with a gift to Paul in his Roman prison, and he was the bearer of the wonderful letter which Paul sent back again, the Epistle of Christian joy. But in the meantime, when the gift from Philippi was exhausted, this noble messenger himself labored for the support of the gospel, and perhaps served as an evangelist at the same time. His exertions were so great as to bring on a sickness which was almost fatal, and which caused Paul the most intense anxiety during its continuance, and when Epaphroditus recovered Paul was profoundly grateful.

This is the man so highly honored by Paul as to be called his "brother" and "fellow-worker" and "fellow-soldier," a man of heroic mould, but tender and sympathetic as a woman. "As far as we know Epaphroditus is the only one of Paul's friends who personally labored for his support while a prisoner in Rome; nay, more than that, he is the only individual of whom we have any record of having supported Paul at any time during his ministry. And so it may truthfully be said that Epaphroditus was the first man, as far as we have any record, who ever had a personal representative in the foreign field." — *Carl Hermon Dudley*. He was a true friend, worthy to be ranked alongside Jonathan of the Old Testament and the devout women who followed Jesus and ministered to him.

OTHER FRIENDS OF PAUL. Paul's life was starred with friendships, and more and more thickly as his years went by. Study his relations with them: not only those named in this lesson, but Barnabas his first missionary partner, John Mark, Silas, Timothy his dear young helper, Luke his beloved physician, Apollos, Titus "my brother," Tychicus the "faithful minister," Euodias, Syntyche, the hospitable Lydia, Andronicus, Junia, Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, Epænetus, Amplias, Stachys, Aristarchus, Epaphras the "beloved fellow-servant," Onesiphorus, Trophimus, Sosthenes "my brother," Mnason of Cyprus, and many, many others. "The veterans of the G. A. R. meet frequently around their camp-fires to exchange rem-

8. Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting,

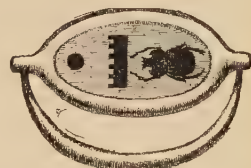
9. Yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus :

10. I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Ō-nēs'-ī-mūs,

iniscences of the Civil War. At such times I have seen their faces flush and their old eyes kindle as if with a replenishment of youth. Are there such camp-fires in heaven? If so what tales have Paul and his Body Guard to tell — of perils oft by land and sea, of prison-damp and loneliness, of hairbreadth escapes, of victories won, of hoping for the service chevron, of visions of cloudy pillars in the air which were not clouds but fluttering garments of the White Christ leading on ! ” — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.* It is such experiences that cement friendship and glorify it.

II. **PAUL'S SLAVE FRIEND, ONESIMUS**, Philemon 1-16. “Philemon was probably the pastor, or bishop, of the church at Colossæ in Asia Minor. Though a pastor, he was a slaveholder, a circumstance which we must not judge by modern standards. Christianity took the world as it found it, and began as it could and where it could to introduce the sublime mystery of the New Manhood.” — *Joseph Parker.* In his letter to Philemon Paul greets Apphia, who was doubtless the wife of Philemon, and Archippus, his “fellow-soldier,” who would seem to be the son of Philemon, and to have in charge some sacred office (Col. 4 : 17). He also sends salutations to the church in the house of Philemon, showing that the household was a center of Christian worship. The opening of the letter contains strong expressions of Paul's satisfaction with Philemon and his family, their love and faith being a constant joy to the apostle.

This letter to Philemon, written by Paul in his Roman prison, is called by Renan “a true little *chef-d'œuvre* of the art of letter-writing.” It exhibits Paul's humane characteristics, his brotherly tenderness, his delicacy and fineness of spirit better perhaps than anything else he ever wrote. Onesimus was a slave who had run away from Philemon, had made his way to Rome, and there had been won by Paul to Christianity and to a sense of his duty to his master. Paul sends him back with this letter to Philemon and also with the Epistle to the Colossian Christians. The slave was indeed the bearer of precious freight.



Seal Ring with Scarabæus.

8. Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting. “Wherefore” goes back to the preceding verse in which Paul has spoken of Philemon's love for him, in which he rejoiced ; that love caused the apostle to beseech rather than command. Paul was Christ's apostle, possessing authority from Christ, well justified by this authority and by his long experience in laying down rules of right conduct. Who would have a better right than he to issue orders anywhere in the Christian church ?

9. **Yet for love's sake I rather beseech.** Love always shrinks from commanding. Orders stand ever on a lower plane than friendship. **Being such a one as Paul the aged.** “Being such as I am, so worn and old in the service of Jesus Christ.” Paul was about sixty, and though a man of sixty is to-day very often in the prime of activity, it was not so in Paul's time ; and the apostle, moreover, had led a most laborious life, had suffered severe sicknesses, and by his many hardships and long imprisonments had been greatly enfeebled. A man is as old as he feels. This condition of the apostle, with the causes that lay back of it, constituted a powerful claim upon any loyal Christian. **And now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus.** Not only old and worn, but “also” a prisoner, an additional reason why his wish should be respected ; for, though to men's eyes he was a prisoner of Nero, in reality he was a prisoner of Christ Jesus, brought to his present estate by his bold and successful preaching of Jesus in many lands. Any criminal might be a prisoner of the Roman Emperor ; only a faithful apostle could win the exalted honor of being a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Paul wore his chains as a crown.

10. **I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus.** Paul spoke of Timothy (1 Tim. 1 : 2 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 2) and Titus (Titus 1 : 4) as his children. He had brought them into his family circle, the blessed company of the children of God.

11. Who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me :

12. Whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart :

13. Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel :

14. But without thy mind I would do nothing ; that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will.

15. For perhaps he was therefore parted *from thee* for a season, that thou shouldst have him for ever ;

16. No longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

17. If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself.

11. Who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me. "Onesimus" means "Profitable," "Helpful," and names of the kind were often given to male slaves, while female slaves bore such names as "Pleasing" and "Winning." By running away (and probably by thievery before he ran away) Onesimus made his master's investment in him an unprofitable one, but now he was ready to be doubly profitable to Philemon as he had been to Paul.

12. Whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart. "See in this returned slave," Paul implies, "far more than Onesimus : see the very heart of your friend Paul ; he is my other self. Reject him and you reject me."

13. Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel. Paul takes it for granted that Philemon would like to serve Paul in his feebleness and imprisonment, just as Onesimus had been serving him. "The bonds of the gospel" means the love which Christ's gospel implants in human hearts, constraining them to serve one another even as Christ has served them.

14. But without thy mind I would do nothing. Paul would not keep Onesimus without learning Philemon's mind in the matter. That thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will. Paul is not hinting that Philemon should send back Onesimus to him, for, besides the expense of such a long journey, Paul is just about to visit Colossæ himself (verse 22). He is only playing delicately with the thought that he *might* have kept the runaway slave, if it had not been forcing his master's kindness. As a matter of fact, Onesimus was sent back because he *ought* to go back, it was his *duty* to return.

15. For perhaps he was therefore parted *from thee* for a season, that thou shouldst have him for ever. Note Paul's caution shown in "perhaps" — he would not presumptuously be sure of God's reason in the event. Note also the word "parted," as if Onesimus had not run away but had been sent away by God. Chrysostom quotes Joseph's kindly and forgiving word to his brothers, "God did send me before you" (Gen. 45 : 5). Philemon did not really have Onesimus when he had him as a slave on compulsion ; he will now have him forever, not on compulsion but as a friend and brother beloved.

16. No longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved. "When in Christian households the relation between master and slave was thus transformed, as Paul pleaded and hoped that in this case it would be, then the institution of slavery itself was likely to be soon abolished, for the inconsistency between such moral obligations and the legal status would become increasingly evident to the enlightened Christian conscience." — *Principal Alfred E. Garvie*. Specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. A slave was regarded as part of his master, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. This close and intimate relation was now in the case of Onesimus and Philemon to be rendered sacred by their mutual love for the Lord Jesus Christ, a bond infinitely more blessed and complete than any other bond.

III. PAUL'S FRIEND PHILEMON, Philem. 17-25. 17. If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself. Paul takes Philemon up into the most vital relationship of partner, associate in Paul's holy apostleship, comrade in the great work of

18. But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth *thee* aught, put that to mine account;

19. I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it : that I say not unto thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides.

20. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord : refresh my heart in Christ.

21. Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say.

bringing all men to a knowledge of Christ, a work of which the conversion of Onesimus was a most happy example. "If you would have me as a partner," says Paul, "you must receive Onesimus as a partner, for he is my other self."

18. But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth *thee* aught, put that to mine account. Onesimus may have stolen money or goods when he ran away, and there were various ways in which a slave might be in debt to his master. Sometimes slaves were placed in control of mercantile enterprises. Sometimes they were "hired out," being expected to hand over their wages to their owner. Often they were entrusted with money to make purchases.

19. I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it. Paul has been dictating the letter, his eyesight being so poor. At this point he takes the pen and himself writes this promissory note, in the "large, scrawling letters" which he had to employ. Compare 2 Thess. 3 : 17; Col. 4 : 18; 1 Cor. 16 : 21; Rom. 16 : 22; and especially Gal. 6 : 11. That I say not unto thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides. The argument is a delicate one and is merely hinted in the word "besides"; "You owe me a new slave," Paul says, "for now Onesimus is wholly devoted to your service; but why talk of minor debts, when you owe me your own renewed life — are you not a new man in Christ Jesus through my ministry?" Who could resist such a plea?

20. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord : refresh my heart in Christ. "Give me joy" by your ready reception of Onesimus. Note how to the apostle all his joys and refreshments are "in the Lord," "in Christ," springing from his Saviour, not separate from but a vital part of his Christian life.

21. Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say. What is this "beyond" which Paul expects? What can it be but the hope that Philemon will free Onesimus? But Paul wishes this act to be of Philemon's own motion and not under compulsion, even the compulsion of friendship.

In the concluding sentences of this wonderful little letter Paul speaks of his approaching visit to Philemon, for he expects soon to be released from prison, and adds salutations from Christians in Rome whom Philemon knows. These are Epaphras, Paul's "fellow-prisoner" — either one who was then or had been in prison with him, or, more likely, a friend so constantly waiting upon him as to seem to be a prisoner also; Marcus — John Mark, the writer of the second Gospel; Aristarchus, also called "fellow-prisoner" in Col. 4 : 10, the Thessalonian who went with Paul on his third missionary tour and was seized in the riot in Ephesus; Demas, who forsook Paul in his last imprisonment (2 Tim. 4 : 10); and Lucas, who was Luke, Paul's beloved physician, writer of the third Gospel and the Acts. Then the Epistle ends appropriately with the benediction.

FRIENDSHIP IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. "Since the world began, unselfish love has been the highest outreach of the human heart and the heart's richest blessing. To be loved unselfishly, to be loved for one's own sake, and to be sure of such a love in spite of all lack or failure on one's own part, is a cause of unfailing joy to the gladdest



Rolls, Ink Well, and Reed Pens.

soul or the saddest. . . . It is good to have a friend, but it is better to be a friend. He who has a pure and unselfish love for any one being in the universe, has thereby a new life, new powers, new possibilities, and new perceptions of all ; and the very universe itself is a new universe to him, as viewed from his new center of love and light. When he who loves unselfishly is unselfishly loved by the object of his affection, so that each of the two loses himself, and finds more than himself, in the other, life seems to be all that life can be here, and to have promise of more than all that can here be gained. . . . Friendship-love, as a love that is unselfish, uncraving, ever out-going, and ever on-going, is in its very nature divine love. It is such a love as God gives, and as man ought to give to God. It is such a love as man should give to his fellow-man for God's sake." — *Henry Clay Trumbull.*

LESSON XII (26). — December 23.

PAUL'S LAST MESSAGE. — 2 Timothy 4 : 1-18.

PRINT vs. 1-8, 16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.* — 2 TIM. 4: 7.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 98.

Primary Topic : PAUL'S LAST MESSAGE TO HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material : 2 TIM. 1 : 1-4 ; 4 : 1-8. **Print** 1 : 1-4 ; 4 : 6-8.

Memory Verse : I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Ps. 23 : 4.

Junior Topic : PAUL'S FAREWELL TO HIS FRIENDS.

Lesson Material : 2 TIM. 1 : 1-4 ; 4 : 1-18. **Print** 1 : 1-4, 6-8.

Memory Verse : Thou therefore, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 TIM. 2 : 1.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : THE CHRISTIAN'S GOAL.

Topic for Young People and Adults : PAUL'S VICTORIOUS FAITH.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Younger Classes have some verses from the first chapter of the Epistle, in addition to the verses from the fourth chapter in which Paul speaks of his coming departure from this earth for heaven and of the joy that awaits him there. The teacher will give his class a spirited account of the ancient athletic contests with the simple crown of leaves which was their only reward, and will compare it, as Paul does, to the Christian life, its struggles, the spirit in which the Christian is to strive, and its glorious prizes.

The Older Classes will study Second Timothy as a whole. It is a superb picture of a life of service and heroism such as all Christians are to live, and not only Christian ministers.

Question Suggested for Discussion : How can the churches of to-day avoid the condemnation which Paul laid upon the backsliding churches he foresaw in the future ?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Fairbairn's *Pastoral Epistles*. Conybeare's *Life and Epistles of Paul*. Boise's *Notes on the Epistles of Paul*. Commentaries on Second Timothy by Horton

(*New Century Bible*), Humphreys (*Cambridge Bible*), Maclaren (*Expositions*), Carroll (*An Interpretation of the English Bible*), Bishop of London (*Bible Commentary*), Dean Spence (*Ellicott's Commentary*), Bishop Hervey (*Pulpit Commentary*), Erdman (*Pastoral Epistles*), Plummer (*Expositor's Bible*).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Authenticity of Second Timothy.
Life and Character of Timothy.
Paul's views of the Christian ministry.
References to athletic contests in Paul's writings.
Paul's allusions to hardships in the Christian life.
Paul's teachings in regard to Christian rewards.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Goal of the Christian Life.

I. A CHARGE TO TIMOTHY, vs. 1-5.

The Book of Second Timothy.
Inspiring counsels.
"Fulfil thy ministry."

II. PAUL'S CROWN, vs. 6-8.

The good fight.
The coming reward.
The Christian's expectation.

III. PAUL'S TRIUMPHANT HOPE, vs. 9-18.

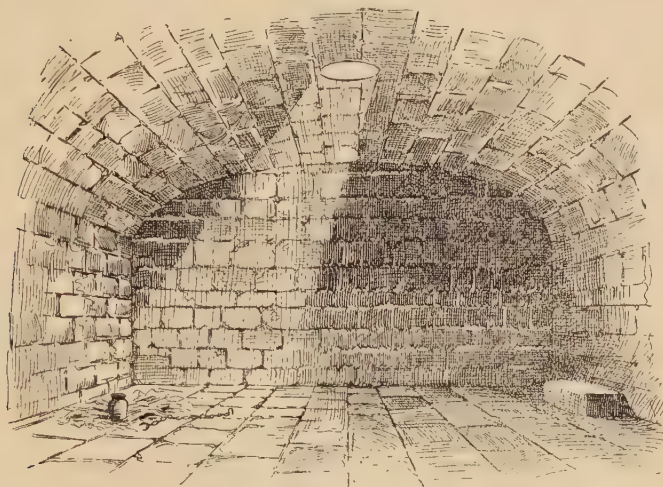
Forsaken by friends.
Strengthened by the Lord.
The end of a glorious career.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's second letter to Timo-

thy was written not long before his martyrdom, which took place A.D. 67.

Place. — Paul's Prison in Rome.



Mamertine Prison, Rome.
Place of St. Paul's second imprisonment.

1. I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom :

I. **A CHARGE TO TIMOTHY**, vs. 1-5. THE BOOK OF SECOND TIMOTHY. "The Second Epistle written by the apostle Paul to Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Epistles. Possibly no other of the New Testament letters makes so tender and so pathetic an appeal. Every paragraph is suffused with emotion, every sentence throbs with the pulse beats of a human heart. Paul is now an aged prisoner in Rome, suffering, deserted, despised, condemned, and soon to be led forth to a cruel death. In his previous captivity he had been allowed to dwell in his own hired house, to converse freely with his friends, and to direct his wide missionary work ; now he is chained in a dark dungeon, he is distressed with the cold, he is absolutely alone save for one faithful friend, Luke, 'the beloved physician,' to whom, probably, he is dictating this moving message of farewell." — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman*.

The Acts leaves Paul in his first Roman imprisonment, lasting two years. When his case came up for trial, he appears to have been released. References in his letters to Timothy and Titus indicate that he went first to visit Macedonia and Asia. He seems to have visited Spain, and to have gone with Titus to Crete. Then he went again to Asia and on to Corinth, probably wintering in Nicopolis in Epirus, where he was arrested once more, on what charge we do not know, and sent to Rome, there to languish again in prison. It was from there that he sent his second letter to his beloved young assistant, Timothy, who was in charge of the church in Ephesus, and whom he urged to come to him in Rome. It is the last of Paul's writings which we possess, his final counsels not only for Timothy but for the church of Christ for which he was so soon to give his life. It is one of the most precious documents in the Bible.

1. I charge *thee* in the sight of God. Not only the apostle is charging Timothy, but he feels that he and Timothy are in the presence of God, and he is passing on to the young minister the commands of the Almighty. And of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead. God has committed to his Son this last solemn act, closing up for each soul the account of his earthly career, and assigning him to eternal life or eternal death. This charge is doubly solemn in view of that coming day of judgment. Some will be alive on that day, but most men will be sleeping in their

2. Preach the word ; be urgent in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching.

3. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine ; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts ;

graves. **And by his appearing and his kingdom.** "His coming, at which we shall stand before him ; his kingdom, in which we shall hope to reign with him." — *Dean Alford.* Paul is heaping up the greatest and most majestic events of the future as warnings and stimuli for his friend.

2. **Preach the word.** Christ is the Word : preach Christ ! the gospel is the word, the good news of salvation through Christ : preach that ! It must be remembered that Paul looked upon Timothy, more than any one else, to be his successor and to carry on his great work. He had been above all a preacher of the word. That is what — with many different ways of preaching — every Christian should be. **Be urgent in season, out of season.** This, of course, does not mean that we are to be tactless in our Christian work : Paul was the most tactful of men, and would be the first to understand that we must be regardful of time and place and opportunity. But our Christian work is to be pressed, it is always in season, we should ever be eager to speak for Christ and work for him, and when the Spirit prompts us we are to obey with no timidity or hesitation, well knowing that he understands the best time and place to do his work. **Reprove, rebuke, exhort.** Reprove sin ; still more, condemn sin ; and still more efficiently, plead with the sinner to turn from his evil ways. Thus the Christian labors with wickedness. **With all long-suffering and teaching.** "You will need to be very patient in your Christian work, son Timothy," Paul virtually says, "for sin is deep-seated and the devil is persistent, and you will fail many times for once that you succeed. Be a teacher, son Timothy," Paul continues ; "give reasons for the faith that is in you. Do not rely wholly on exhortation but add instruction. Cultivate the head of your converts as well as the heart, for both are needed in the Christian life."

3. **For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine.** "The correct teaching" of Christianity, no specific doctrines, in our sense of the word, being in mind. Pure Christianity calls for unworldliness, self-sacrifice, heroic devotion to the cause

of Christ, such a life of hardship and courage as Paul had lived. He saw a time coming when the Christian church would become soft, luxurious, weak, and worldly, thrusting aside the strenuous commands of its Lord. But, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts. "Itching ears" are ears that want to be tickled with verbal novelties, with rhetoric and elo-



A Grecian Stadium.

quence, with wit and extravagance, with new and strange teachings ; the gospel has become tame and familiar to them. They bring together into their churches a great crowd of preachers who will cater to these unhealthy desires. Paul seems to be painting a picture of our own days in far too many churches.

4. **And will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables.** These fables were "tales of lying wonders concerning reputed saints and their

4. And will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables.

5. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry.

6. For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come.

7. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith :

8. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.

adversaries in this world and the next. The modern tendency in Protestant countries, even when turning away the ear from the truth, can scarcely be said to take this particular direction; the substitution is not fables, but rather science falsely so called — science, not in its ascertained results, but in its speculative processes and rash deductions." — *Principal Patrick Fairbairn*.

5. **But be thou sober in all things.** "Sober" implies that the persons just described are drunken in their folly. Timothy is to avoid all such mental intoxication and to maintain a steady, firm, and temperate mind. **Suffer hardship.** Twice before in this brief letter (1 : 8 ; 2 : 3) Paul has urged Timothy to be ready to endure the hardships which will surely come to the younger minister as to the older. **Do the work of an evangelist.** "This does not mean that there was a special order of evangelists, but that the work of proclaiming the good news (1 Cor. 1 : 17) — and that is the meaning of evangelize — as it had been the chief work of an apostle, Paul, must be the chief work of his successor, who could not be an apostle, Timothy. The apostolate ceased with that generation : the evangelist must exist until the good news is known by all the world." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.* **Fulfil thy ministry.** "Ministry" is literally "diaconate," the work of a *deacon*, or *servant* of the church. "Minister" means literally the same thing, a servant. Timothy is to be a completely useful servant of the churches under his charge.

II. **PAUL'S CROWN**, vs. 6-8. 6. **For I am already being offered.** "For" introduces the reason for the preceding exhortation : Paul was soon to be called away from his earthly labors, hence the greater responsibility of Timothy." — *Prof. James R. Boise*. "Offered" is literally, "poured out as a drink offering," an offering of some liquid poured out on the ground. **And the time of my departure is come.** "Departure" in the Greek is a metaphorical word, alluding to the loosing of tent cords for a journey by land or the weighing of the anchor for a journey by sea. Paul was about to set out over the unknown sea of death toward the joyful haven of heaven, where he would ever be with the Lord in that "better country." There is a note of eagerness here.

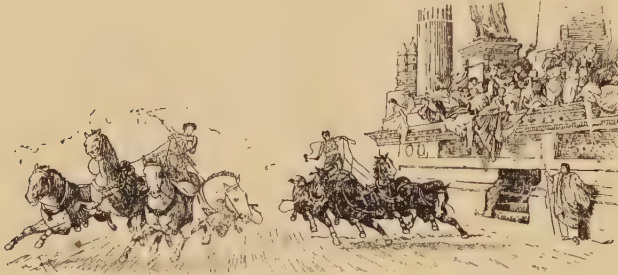
7. **I have fought the good fight.** "It is not strictly correct to render the two Greek words, 'I have fought the fight.' The metaphor is taken from the Greek foot races. 'I have run the good race' would be more exact. The literal English is, 'I have completed the glorious contest.'" — *W. J. Conybeare*. **I have finished the course.** Paul had gone over the entire course marked out for the foot race, from start to finish; he had reached the goal at last. Thus Christ on the cross said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. **I have kept the faith.** "The faith" is used here "in the same objective sense as so often throughout these Epistles, the sacred deposit of historic truth and teaching; compare 1 Tim. 6 : 20, 21, etc." — *Rev. A. E. Humphreys*.

8. **Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.** The thought of the Greek athletic contests is continued, the crown being the wreath of leaves which was the only but the greatly coveted reward for victory in the games. In the Olympic games it was a wreath of olive leaves; in the Pythian games, a wreath of laurel; in the Nemean games, a wreath of parsley; and in the Isthmian games, a wreath of ivy. Each crown was for superiority in some one contest : thus there



Coin Showing Wreaths Won by Victors in the Isthmian Games.

would be a crown "of discus-throwing," a crown "of wrestling," a crown "of boxing"; Paul's was a crown "of righteousness." It was "laid up" in store for him, awaiting his coming to claim it. **Which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day.** "That day" (the same phrase is used in 2 Tim. 1: 12, 18) is the day of judgment, when the Lord will render to every man according to his works (Matt. 16: 27). **And not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.** "All who have believed in his advent." — *President B. H. Carroll.*



A Chariot Race in the Circus Maximus.

Alex Wagner.

All that have looked forward with eager and loving expectation to the second coming of our Lord, when he will give their crowns to the faithful. "Paul could not easily have given a more simple or sure method of finding out who those are who have a right to believe that the Lord has a crown of righteousness in

store for them. Are we among the number? In order to answer this question we must ask ourselves another. Are our lives such that we are longing for Christ's return? Or are we dreading it, because we know that we are not fit to meet him, and are making no attempt to become so?" — *Alfred Plummer.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPECTATION. "The important question for each of us is how may we have such a hope, like a great sunset light shining into the western windows of our souls? There is but one answer — trust Christ. That is enough. Nothing else is. Is your life built on Jesus Christ? Are you trusting your salvation to him? Are you giving him your love and service? Does your life bear looking at to-day? Will it bear looking at in death? Will it bear looking at in judgment? If you can humbly say, To me to live is Christ, then it is well. Living by him we may fight and conquer, may win and obtain. Living by him, we may be ready quietly to lie down when the time comes, and may have all the future filled with the blaze of a great hope that glows brighter as the darkness thickens. That peaceful hope will not leave us till consciousness fails, and then, when it has ceased to guide us, Christ himself will lead us, scarcely knowing where we are, through the waters, and when we open our half-bewildered eyes in brief wonder, the first thing we see will be his welcoming smile, and his voice will say, as a tender surgeon might to a little child waking after an operation, 'It is all over.' We lift our hand wondering and find wreaths on our poor brows. We lift our eyes, and lo! all about us is a crowned crowd of conquerors,

'And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which we have loved long since, and lost awhile.'" — *Alexander MacLaren.*

III. PAUL'S TRIUMPHANT HOPE, vs. 9-18. FORSAKEN BY FRIENDS. Paul now urges Timothy to use all diligence to come to him in Rome as soon as possible, because he is almost deserted. Demas (short for Demetrius), who had been with Paul in his first imprisonment (Col. 4: 14), had forsaken the apostle in order to attend to some worldly business which he regarded as of more importance. Crescens had gone to Galatia (probably Gaul), and Titus to Dalmatia on the east coast of the Adriatic, each of them probably following up Paul's visit not long before. Tychicus had been sent by Paul to Ephesus. Luke alone was with Paul, Luke the faithful physician. So Timothy was urged to come soon, and to bring with him John Mark, whom Paul found useful in many ways. It was cold in Paul's prison, and so he asked Timothy to bring with him a cloak which he had left at Troas with Carpus. It was lonely in the prison, and Paul begged Timothy to bring with him the papyrus books (probably also left with Carpus), and also the still more precious manuscripts written on parchment (vellum). Some think that Paul was arrested at Troas and for that reason had left his possessions there; also that "Alexander the copper-smith," here named as having done Paul much harm, was the man who had caused

16. At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account.

17. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18. The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul's arrest, so that Timothy is warned to be on his guard against him when he goes through Troas on his way to Rome.

16. **At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me.** Paul's "first defence" was the first trial before Nero or his representative, which was adjourned for another hearing. "Took my part" is a technical word signifying 'standing by' an accused person as friend or assistant, to aid and abet him in his defence. Powerful men sometimes brought such a multitude of assistants as to overawe the magistrate, as Orgetorix the Helvetian, when summoned to trial, appeared with ten thousand followers, and so there was no trial. Paul, like his Lord and Master, of whom it is written, 'All his disciples forsook him and fled,' had no one to stand with him in his hour of need." — *Pulpit Commentary*. **May it not be laid to their account.** Charged up against them. The spirit of forgiveness is with Paul in this dark hour, as with Christ on the cross.

STRENGTHENED BY THE LORD. 17. **But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me.** "Paul remembered, no doubt, his own Master, who, too, in his hour of deadly peril, had been forsaken. (See John 16: 32, 'Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and ye shall leave me alone.') But like his own Master, who proceeded to say, 'Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me,' so St. Paul went on to tell Timothy neither was he alone, for One greater than any friend on earth stood by him." — *Dean Spence*. **That through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear.** This may refer to the crowd present in the courtroom, or the thought may be that anything spoken there at the center of the Gentile world would be sure to be spread abroad everywhere. "The message" is the same as "the gospel," the good news of Christ's salvation which Paul incorporated in his defence. **And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.** "The lion is perhaps an allusion to Dan. 6: 20 and Ps. 22: 21, without any more definite reference. But considering the popular cry, *Christianos ad leones*, it is difficult not to see a hint at the awful doom of the condemned to be thrown to the lions in the amphitheatre. To suppose that the lion is Nero, or Satan, 'who goeth about as a roaring lion' (1 Pet. 5: 8), is far less probable." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

18. **The Lord will deliver me from every evil work.** From all the efforts of Satan to overthrow the apostle, destroy his life work, and make his testimony void. This seems to be a thought taken out of the Lord's Prayer: "Deliver us from evil." **And will save me unto his heavenly kingdom.** "Thy kingdom come." "This is not the expression of the apostle's belief that he will be delivered from the Roman courts and from death, but that he who saved him from the lesser danger would save him through all evil, even to the completion of his salvation in heaven." — *Speaker's Commentary*. **To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.** The presence of this doxology, closing a passage containing so many parallels with the Lord's Prayer, indicates that the doxology so closely associated with the Lord's Prayer was of very early usage, though it is not found in the earliest New Testament manuscripts and so is omitted from our revised translations.

THE END OF A GLORIOUS CAREER. But Paul cannot close with the doxology, for he must get in a greeting to Priscilla and Aquila who are with Timothy at Ephesus, and also to the family of Onesiphorus who had been kind to Paul in Rome (2 Tim. 1: 16-18). There is news also to give regarding two Christians known to Timothy, one of whom Paul knows to be at Corinth, and the other is sick at Miletus; perhaps Timothy will look them up on his way to Rome ("Hurry and get here before winter!") Then there are greetings from prominent members of the church in Rome known to Timothy; perhaps they came to see Paul while he was ending his dictation of the letter. Then a double benediction upon Paul's dear young friend, and an "Amen" closes the writings of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

It is not at all likely that Timothy reached Rome in time to greet his revered "father in the Lord" and cheer his last hours. Paul was beheaded — on the Ostian Way, according to tradition — some time between the end of A.D. 66 and the death of Nero, which took place on June 9, A.D. 68. Thus one of the noblest of men ended his glorious career, and went to be with Christ, which, he said, "is very far better" (Phil. 1 : 23).

ALTERNATE LESSON.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS. — Luke 2 : 1-20.

PRINT vs. 8-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.* — LUKE 2 : 11.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 11 : 1-9.

Primary Topic : THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Lesson Material : Luke 2 : 1-20. Print vs. 8-20.

Memory Verse : There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2 : 11.

Junior Topic : THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Lesson Material : Luke 2 : 1-20. Print vs. 8-20.

Memory Verse : Luke 2 : 11.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : HOW TO OBSERVE CHRISTMAS.

Topic for Young People and Adults : THE INCARNATION.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The First Christmas.

I. NO ROOM IN THE INN, vs. 1-7.

The Roman census.

The King in a manger.

II. THE ANGEL'S CHRISTMAS TIDINGS, vs. 8-12.

The shepherds keeping watch.

Good tidings of great joy.

III. THE CHRISTMAS ANTHEM, vs. 13-20.

Glory to God, on earth peace.
The shepherds visit the stable.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Our Lord was born, according to tradition, on December 25 ; the year was B.C. 5, because of an error made in computing our Christian chronology.

Place. — Bethlehem, six miles south of Jerusalem.

I. NO ROOM IN THE INN, vs. 1-7. THE ROMAN CENSUS. When Augustus was Emperor of Rome and Quirinius was Roman governor of Syria (including Palestine), a census of all the inhabitants of Palestine was ordered. According to Jewish custom, all the Jews went to their ancestral homes. Of course, the descendants of the great King David all travelled to Bethlehem, the little town six miles south of Jerusalem where the wonderful shepherd boy was born.



From a photograph by A. Forder.

Mangers in the Interior of a House in Nazareth.

Among these was a carpenter named Joseph, from an obscure village, Nazareth, in the northern province of Galilee, and with him was his betrothed, Mary, both of them being descended from David. It was a long and hard journey for the two, for Joseph probably walked, leading a donkey on which Mary rode, and the road was hardly more than a rough and stony path winding about among the hills.

THE KING IN A MANGER. Arrived in Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary found the place so crowded that there was absolutely no room for them in the poor little inn,

8. And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.

9. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people:

11. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

12. And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

and the only refuge they could find was the inn stable. This, according to a very probable tradition, was a mere cave in a hillside, and the manger would be only a rough trough hollowed out in the side of the cave. The floor of earth or stone might have had a rude covering of straw. In such a cave at Bethlehem, perhaps in the identical cave, lived for many years St. Jerome who translated the Bible into Latin, the famous translation called the Vulgate or Common translation.

In this poor place Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men, the Messiah foretold by the ancient prophets, the King of kings and Lord of lords. It had been foretold ages before that a virgin should bear a son, and the prophecy had been repeated by angels to both Joseph and Mary, as the history is related by Matthew and Luke. If God were to come to earth and show his love for men by identifying himself with the lowliest human lot, it is hard to see how it could have been done more completely, fittingly, and beautifully. At the same time it is so far from human expectations, or from any story such as men would have invented, that the simple record in the New Testament has won the grateful assent of men of faith through all the centuries.

II. THE ANGEL'S CHRISTMAS TIDINGS, vs. 8-12. 8. And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. These were not Bethlehem shepherds but they belonged to the same region; according to tradition, they came from the little village of Beth-zur. David the shepherd boy who became a great king, the most famous human ancestor of our Lord, tended sheep in the same fields. In these fields were kept the sheep used for sacrifices in the temple at Jerusalem, and we are told that these sheep, in that mild climate, were kept outdoors all winter, so that the tradition may be true which places the birth of Christ on December 25. It is an indication of the dignity which the religion of the Carpenter was to confer upon all honorable toil that the first announcement of his birth was made by angels to these poor and lowly laborers.

9. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. This "glory of the Lord" was the Shechinah or flaming brightness in which Jehovah clothed his appearances throughout the Old Testament, as above the mercy seat of the ark, or in the bright cloud which led the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. The shepherds felt the terror which mortals always feel when in the presence of the supernatural, such fear as Isaiah felt when Jehovah appeared to him in shining majesty in the temple.

10. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid. This is a command spoken more than once by Jesus. For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. "Evangel" is from two Greek words meaning "good (ev) news (angel)." An angel is a bearer of news, a messenger. The world before Christ was a very sad place. Christ came to make it a place of great joy, which it is wherever he is received in human hearts.

11. For there is born to you this day in the city of David. Bethlehem, where David was born and where he was anointed king by Samuel. A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. At the very birth of Jesus three fundamental facts regarding him are announced: that he is to save men from their sins, that he is to fulfil the ancient prophecies of the Christ (the Messiah), and that he is to exercise rightful authority over the hearts and lives of men, being their Lord.

12. And this is the sign unto you. The sign of the truth of the good news of the Saviour's birth; it would need evidence, being "too good to be true" otherwise. Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. "Swaddling clothes" were long bands of soft cloth wrapped around newborn babes. The

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14. Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

15. And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

17. And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

sign was in the unusual combination of circumstances, that a new-born babe should lie in a manger.

III. THE CHRISTMAS ANTHEM. vs. 13-20. 13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying. This was a portion of the innumerable army of heaven. The most majestic title of the Deity is perhaps "Lord God of Sabaoth," that is, the Lord of Hosts. All of these vast multitudes that no man can number were praising God with the Christmas anthem.

14. **Glory to God in the highest.** In the highest degree; more likely in the highest heaven, for the Jews thought of heaven as in seven layers, one above the other. **And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.** The old form of the anthem, "good will to men," is found in only one of the most ancient manuscripts, while the form, "among men of good will," that is, "of God's good will," is found in the other manuscripts (three in number) of the oldest date. Christ is the "Prince of peace," as Isaiah foretold; but his peace can enter only the lives that are conformed to his will and so are free from sin. There is no way to get rid of the spirit of war except by getting Christ's Spirit into human hearts.

15. **And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven.** The angelic host seemed to rise and the heavens to close about them as a gigantic curtain, perhaps like the waving folds of the northern lights. **The shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.** The shepherds "were saying," implying that they talked the matter over before deciding. They had to arrange, of course, for some of their number to remain behind and care for the sheep.

16. **And they came with haste.** They were afraid that the wonderful Babe might be snatched away from sight as the angels had been. **And found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.** "Found" in the Greek means "discovered," found after a search; for Bethlehem was crowded, and they had nothing to guide them except the reference to a manger. They were obliged to look in stable after

stable till they found a babe in a manger. Mary and Joseph they had not been told to find, and might have imagined they would see a babe lying all alone.

17. **And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.** "Thus they were the first Christian preachers." —



The Nativity.

Karl Schönberr.

18. And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds.

19. But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

F. W. Farrar. The subject of their sermon was, "This child is the Messiah foretold by the olden prophets, he is the Saviour of the world, he is the Lord of life, so proclaimed by angels from the opened heavens." Mary and Joseph were told first, the shepherds confirming what they knew already; then the sermon was preached to the people of Bethlehem as the shepherds met them on their way back to the fields.

18. **And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds.** They wondered at the news, though it had been written in the Bible for many generations, read often in the synagogues, and discussed in the schools. Even to-day, after two thousand years, the Christmas tidings seem unbelievably strange. It is the greatest event in the world's history that happened then in Bethlehem, and familiarity with it never renders it commonplace to the thoughtful mind.

19. **But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.** She thought them over, not understanding them at first. "This verse throws light on the character of Mary, of whom we know so little; she was of a meditative disposition, pondering what happened. It also hints at the source of Luke's information, that he obtained it from Mary." — *Principal W. F. Adeney.*

20. **And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.** The revelation had been made to men worthy of it. Poor and lowly, they were men to whom the great truths of religion had a profound meaning. In their long watches they had pondered the prophecies, and were ready to recognize their fulfilment. They had enough knowledge of the world at large and of the human heart to know men's appalling need of a Saviour, and to praise God for his coming. To such as these the Christmas message comes to-day, and by such as these it is spread abroad over the world.

LESSON XIII (27). — December 30.

REVIEW: PAUL, THE WORLD CHRISTIAN.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For to me to live is Christ.* — PHIL. I: 21.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 103: 1-5, 8-13.

Primary Topic: STORIES OF PAUL.

Memory Verse: I have finished the course. 2 Tim. 4: 7.

Junior Topic: WHAT PAUL'S LIFE TEACHES US.

Memory Verse: 2 Tim. 4: 7.

Intermediate and Senior Topic: THE SECRET OF PAUL'S GREATNESS.

Topic for Young People and Adults: THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PAUL.

Six different forms of review are here given, suited to classes of different ages and ability. The plans may be combined if the teacher desires.

I. FINISH-THE-SENTENCE REVIEW.

The teacher will fasten to a screen the Lesson Pictures for the quarter sold by the publishers of this book, and will use them as she takes up the lessons in order. Taking a pointer, she will point to the first picture and will begin to talk about it, but will stop before finishing the first sentence and will point to a pupil with the pointer, asking the pupil to finish the sentence. Continue until the lesson story has been told, when the teacher will take down the picture and give it to the pupil who finished the last sentence. For example, if you are on Lesson IV., you may begin: Paul was on his way to Jerusalem when he stopped at Miletus and sent to ————. He sent to Ephesus for ————. When the elders of the church in Ephesus came, he talked to them about ————, and so on. Thus you will go through all

the lessons, taking pains to stop each time with a different pupil, so that all of them may have pictures as souvenirs of the quarter's work.

II. A FISH-POND REVIEW.

For this review the teacher will prepare a number of questions on the quarter's lessons, from three to six on each lesson, taking pains to make each question independent of the others, perfectly clear by itself. Write each question on a piece of paper cut into the shape of a fish, and with a hole punched in the head. Take a deep pasteboard box and paint the sides green with wave-like lines of white to imitate water. Provide a "fishing-pole" with a line and hook, which the pupils will use in turn, "fishing" in the "pond." The back of the box will open (and the top also, of course), and the "fishes" will lie on the bottom of the box. As the hook descends the teacher will attach a question-fish to it, the line will be pulled up, the pupil will take off the "fish," read the question aloud, and answer it. If he cannot answer, his right-hand neighbor has a chance. Whoever answers the question keeps the fish, and a book about Paul may be given to the pupil who has most fish at the close of the lesson hour.

III. A PRACTICAL PROBLEMS REVIEW.

For this review, which is suited to the older classes, the teacher will select for each lesson some practical problem on which the lesson throws light, and will ask some member of the class to write a little essay on the subject, introducing wisdom from the lesson. Limit each strictly in time — two or three minutes. The following list of problems may be used :

- Lesson 1.* — The problem of getting rid of superstition.
- Lesson 2.* — The problem of loving everybody.
- Lesson 3.* — The problem of the right use of money.
- Lesson 4.* — The problem of energizing the churches.
- Lesson 5.* — The problem of conquering intemperance.
- Lesson 6.* — The problem of abolishing war.
- Lesson 7.* — The problem of destroying fanaticism.
- Lesson 8.* — The problem of prevailing prayer.
- Lesson 9.* — The problem of getting justice done.
- Lesson 10.* — The problem of untoward circumstances.
- Lesson 11.* — The problem of true friendship.
- Lesson 12.* — The problem of making a success of life.

IV. A PORTRAIT OF PAUL.

For this review assign to different members of the class the chief characteristics of Paul, each member to speak of the quality assigned him and show how it is illustrated in Paul's life and words, or else write a little essay on it and read the essay in the class. Limit the time of each. The following list may be used :

- Paul's humanness.
- Paul's friendliness.
- Paul's heroism.
- Paul's faith.
- Paul's insight into truth.
- Paul's enterprise.
- Paul's versatility.
- Paul's tact.
- Paul's perseverance.
- Paul's organizing ability.
- Paul's spirituality.
- Paul's commanding genius.

V. A THREE-SENTENCE REVIEW.

Ask the pupils to go over at home each lesson of the quarter and condense it into three sentences. These sentences are to set forth the main events and teachings of the lesson. The sentences are to be as brief as possible, but each is to be complete. In the class all the condensations of the first lesson will first be read, and the teacher

and class will decide which is best, then passing on to the second lesson ; and so on till all are thus reviewed. Thus, for Lesson 12, " Paul's Last Message " : " Paul, from his second Roman imprisonment, wrote a letter of counsel to his dear young associate, Timothy. He urged Timothy to be zealous in Christian service and firm in the endurance of hardship. For himself, Paul anticipated a speedy execution, to be followed by a crown of righteousness, the prize of the race of life which he had run so faithfully."

VI. A TRANSFORMATION REVIEW.

Ask the class to review the quarter's lessons, considering the changes that would be made in modern life if every Christian followed the example of Paul as shown in the narrative lessons and his teachings as shown in the didactic lessons. Each member of the class will go over all the lessons with this thought in mind and come to the class ready with at least one " transformation " thought for each lesson. Then these thoughts will all be brought together for each lesson in turn.



Julius von Schnorr.

Paul Reaches Rome in Chains.

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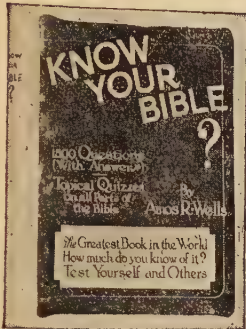
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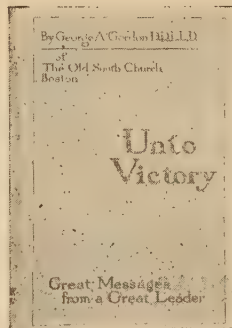
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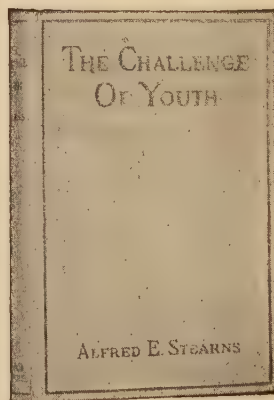
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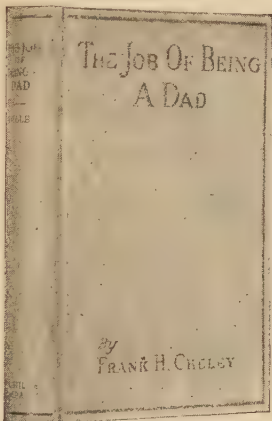


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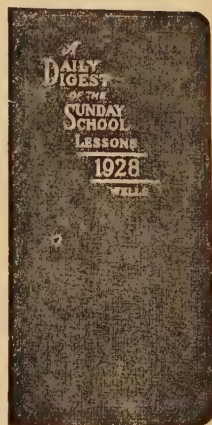
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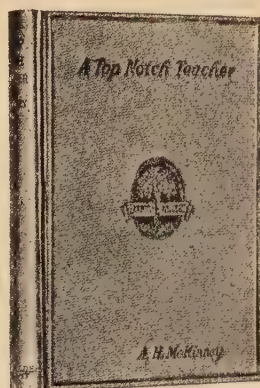
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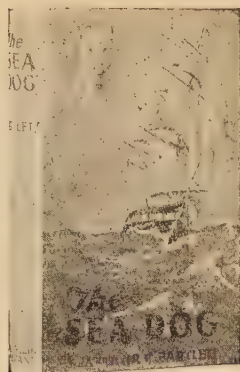
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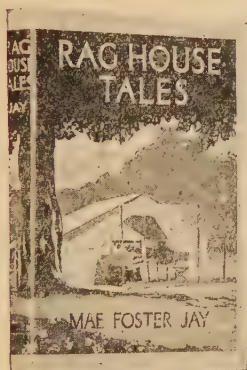
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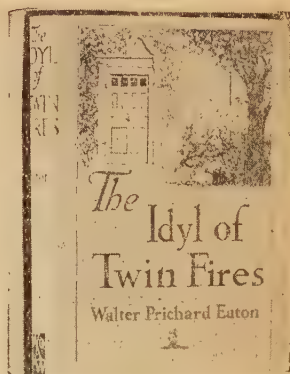
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